

Granville Sharp 1789

OBSERVATIONS
ON
VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

- I. On the SEVEN TIMES SEVENTY YEARS of
DANIEL, *Ch. ix. 24—27.*
- II. On the CANON of the OLD TESTAMENT.
- III. On the TRUE READING of the PASSAGE
I. TIM. iii, 16.

BY
JOHN CASPAR VELTHUSEN,

One of HIS MAJESTY'S German Chaplains.



L O N D O N,

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MDCCLXXIII.

17

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P R E F A C E.

THE Author is obliged to an English Friend for his trouble in revising the Manuscript before it was given to the press, and hopes to be excused as to the style, only wishing to be clear and intelligible. The Observations on the authenticity of the Old Testament, and the Remarks on 1. TIM. iii, 16. were originally published in German.

In SIR ISAAC NEWTON'S Letter, I have since met with some Arguments more obvious indeed to every attentive reader, which, maturely considered, might rather serve to confirm, than to weaken, the vulgar reading. The
principal

P R E F A C E.

principal objections of this great Man, I find to be the same, which were quoted from His Letter by Wettstein. There is one observation of more consequence, however, not repeated by Wettstein; viz. "That the Authors of the Oxford Edition of the New Testament, A. C. 1675, read δ in the Manuscript of Lincoln College Library, which (he says) is the oldest of the Oxford Manuscripts." But I only mention this to shew that I have not willingly overlooked any thing that might be further opposed to the opinion which seems to me the most probable.

CON-



CONJECTURES
O N T H E
SEVEN-TIMES SEVENTY YEARS
O F
D A N I E L.
(CH. IX. 24--27.)

THE following conjectures were
occasioned by, and are chiefly
founded upon, the learned and
celebrated *Professor* MICHAELIS's *Letters*
to SIR JOHN PRINGLE *Baronet*. If they
should appear probable, the whole merit is
due to Mr. MICHAELIS, to whom the Au-
thor is indebted in so many other respects.

Whatever may be the result of the cal-
culation, it cannot be denied that the pas-

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sage

sage in question contains an ancient prediction of some most remarkable events which happened many centuries after the time of the prophecy : and in matters of so perplexed a nature, as those of ancient Chronology are allowed to be, a candid Enquirer will be satisfied, if he comes *very near* the time, though perhaps he may not exactly reach the year ; because it will in this case be probable, that at the time of the Messiah the calculation did entirely agree, it being likewise certain that he was then expected by the Jews.

To me it appears very remarkable, that at this great distance of time so many different calculations should still so nearly agree with the Period of the Messiah as they actually do. Those who believe that the years are to be computed by the course of the moon, will be highly pleased with Mr. MICHAELIS's calculation, which I apprehend is the most probable of all that have hitherto appeared.

This ingenious writer however does not suppose that his hypothesis is liable to no objections,

jections. He himself says, * “ That he has
 “ only tried the computation by Lunar
 “ years, because he had in vain attempted
 “ it by Solar years :”—So that it seems he
 would have preferred the Solar or Julian
 years, and would still do so, if their agree-
 ment with history could be proved. For
 my own part, I apprehend, that the He-
 brews, when speaking of a *Series of years*
taken together, always meant such years,
 as, though originally computed by the
 course of the moon, yet were afterwards,
 by inserting as many days or months as
 were wanting, made equal to so many
 Solar years. † Thus, when we say 40 years,
 we do not mean 40-times 365, or 14,600
 days; but we suppose one day inserted
 every 4th year, and mean 14,610 days.
 The same idea appears to have obtained
 among the Jews, in their civil compu-
 B 2 tation,

* Pag. 254 & 255, of his *German Pamphlet* on the
 subject.

† See Mann. de veris annis D. N. Jesu Christi
 natali & emortuali. Londin. 1752. 8vo. pag. 219.

tation, as well as in their history; and the seventy years of the Babylonish captivity, as determined by JEREMIAH and mentioned in this 9th chapter of DANIEL, are universally allowed to be Solar years. I cannot, therefore, help being of opinion, that DANIEL, as he has not declared the contrary, must likewise in this passage be interpreted as speaking, not of mathematical, but of civil or common years.

Another difficulty attending the calculation by Lunar years, arises from the supposition, that the *seven* years in the 25th verse, are an erroneous reading, though all the ancient Interpreters as well as all the manuscripts hitherto known agree in this very material number. There is indeed one MS. in which a modern corrector has changed the word *seven* to *seventy*. But perhaps the corrector, finding the number *seventy* in some other MS. might be mistaken with regard to the place in which it ought to be inserted; so that this correction may serve to confirm the subsequent reading of *seventy*,

seventy, though it cannot condemn the former reading of *seven* in this 25th verse. For I am entirely of Mr. MICHAELIS's opinion, that the number *seventy* does occur in the latter part of the verse: and his pamphlet seems to offer an argument or two of very great weight in support of this opinion. The ambiguity lies in the word *Vesbabbuim*, (and weeks,) which may be pronounced the second time, without altering the consonants, *Vesbibhim* (and seventy.) Mr. MICHAELIS observes, * not only where these ambiguous letters occur the *first* time in the 25th verse, but also where they are repeated in the 26th verse, that one of *Doctor KENNICOTT's* MSS, to make the signification more distinct, has added a *Vau*, so that it must be pronounced *Shabbuim* (weeks.) Should this distinction be observed in the same MS. in two places, and should this *Vau* be left out the *second* time in the 25th verse,

* See Mr. Michaelis's Letters on the subject. pag. 82. & 135.

verse, this would be a proof that we ought to pronounce it there, as I do, not Shabhuîm, (with a Vau,) but Shibhîm (without a Vau.) However this conjecture is only grounded on Mr. MICHAELIS's not observing the Vau in *Sh-bh-îm*, where it occurs the *second* time in the 25th verse: and perhaps the MS in question is that which I saw in the British Museum, marked in the Harleian Library Numb. 5775, and in which the distinctive Vau is inserted as well in this word as in the two other places. But with regard to another MS, collated by *Doctor* KENNICOTT, there can be no doubt; this MS distinguishing the following 62 by the conjunction *and*, [AND 62] did certainly suppose the foregoing word to be pronounced as a number, Shibhîm [70], not Shabhuîm (weeks.) *

Even one single manuscript will be thought a sufficient witness in a question that only concerns the points. However
it

* Letters pag. 93.

it would be very useful in such passages as that before us, to know not only the various readings of the consonants, but also of the vowels, and even of the accents; because the separating the word in question from that which follows, and the connecting it with that which precedes, would likewise be a decisive argument against the vulgar pronunciation.

This Sanction, derived from a MS, is moreover confirmed by the testimony of the most ancient Version. For the Septuagint lately published at Rome, (with the sight of which I have been favoured by SIR JOHN PRINGLE,) though it gives us the numbers transposed, yet puts them twice, in this manner: *First*, (v. 26.) 77 and 62; and *then*, (v. 27.) After *seven* and SEVENTY times and 62 years.

On these authorities I would rather pronounce the letters *sh-bh-im*, (where they occur the *second* time in the 25th verse,) *shibhîm*, instead of *shabhuîm*; and without any further alteration, translate
the

the words: *seven times seven and seventy,**
sixty two.

Although some single expressions in the passage are still obscure to me, I take the following paraphrastical translation to be the most agreeable to the Hebrew grammar, the context and the usual Tenor of the words.

“ As seventy was the appointed number for the Babylonish captivity, so now
“ *seven times SEVENTY † is determined in*
“ *regard to thy people and to thy holy city,*
“ *that the transgression may be restrained,*
“ *and sins abolished, and iniquity expiated,*
“ *and*

* It is true indeed that according to the common method of the Hebrews, in putting the smaller number behind, it should have been ranged in the original text in this manner: *seventy and seven.* But here it is expressed with some emphasis, “ not only seventy, but *seven and seventy septenaries!*” nor is it against grammar to place the smaller number first. For ex. *Esther viii, 9. seven and twenty.*

† Strictly, *seventy weeks,* (as *Levit. xxv. 8.*) *70 septenaries.*

“ and everlasting righteousness brought in,
 “ and visions and prophecies fulfilled, * and
 “ the MOST HOLY † anointed. Further thou
 “ shalt know the time more exactly indi-
 “ cated, and consider : — From the pub-
 “ lication of the Edict that Jerusalem should
 “ be rebuilt, unto victorious § Messiah, seven-
 “ times SEVEN and seventy ; sixty and two !
 “ — It will be built again, as to the streets
 “ and the wall ; but in times of trouble. —
 “ And after the septenaries, ‡ sixty and two !
 “ — Messiah will be extirpated and have
 “ no posterity left to him, and a victorious
 “ people

* Strictly, vision and prophet sealed.

† Strictly, a most holy one.

§ Here, and *verse* 26, I translate, *victorious* or *heroick* Messiah, and a *victorious* or *heroick* people ; taking the signification from the arabick, in which the word is an adjective ; this will remove some grammatical difficulty. Professor *Hassencamp* at Rinteln has already given a hint of this translation.

‡ By this translation another grammatical difficulty is removed, which Mr. *Michaelis* has pointed out in his Letters, pag. 134.

" people which is to come shall destroy * the
 " city and the sanctuary : and it † will end
 " as

* The extirpation of the Messiah, though it happened before the fixed time, will introduce a *great Revolution at the end of sixty two years* after the seventy seven septenary periods. The crime which should occasion that sad revolution being mentioned, the event is then described, which was to come to pass at the time foretold. — If this explication should not be approved, on a supposition, that at the time pointed out the *Extirpation* must happen, we may with equal propriety pronounce the verb as an active, " Messiah will extirpate (it,)" that is to say, the city with the temple; though I think this construction more harsh than the other, and therefore would rather paraphrase the words, " The Messiah being killed like a malefactor in his youthful years, and " as it were deprived of posterity, there shall rise " an heroick people to avenge his death." The supplying of what is deficient by *posterity* seems to me the most natural; as this idea is implied in the preceding verb; — He will be *extirpated*, or killed before he has given birth to any offspring.

† Even *the sanctuary* will end in a total desolation. Strictly, *its* end will be, &c. This pronoun, being a masculine, belongs in point of *Grammar* to the sanctuary or *the temple*, though (as to sense) it does not exclude the city.

" as it were *in a deluge* or in a total confusion: *and until the end of the war,*
 " *which is to be shortened,* * there will be
 " perpetual and the most cruel *devastations.*

" *However,* ONE peculiar WEEK shall
 " *magnify*† THE COVENANT to many; and

C 2

THE

* Those who are inclined to grant two grammatical anomalies in the same proposition, may translate, " And *at* the end, the war will be shortened *by* devastations." The signification of the particle *at* might be proved, and the omission of the particle *by* is not unusual in the Hebrew. Not to mention that this explication would more nearly agree with the description of *Josephus*. (Compare *Matth. xxiv. 22.*

† Or, *glorify*. — I take the signification of the verb as it occurs *Psaln ciii. 11.* — " Though it may seem
 " as if now *the covenant of God* was at an end, the
 " temple again being destroyed, yet there is ONE
 " WEEK to come which will induce many to praise
 " the great covenant of the Lord with his people;
 " *one week*, which shall render the covenant great
 " and dear to many!" — If we translate the verb by *strengthening* or *confirming* the covenant *for* many, the meaning is the same; namely, that something is to happen during this ONE WEEK, by which the believing part of the nation shall be strengthened in their faith. — The words may also be translated

“THE MIDDLE OF THIS WEEK shall cause
 “sacrifice and oblation to cease. But on the
 “wings of the most abominable and profan-
 “ing Desolations the Destroyer of Jerusa-
 “lem rushes on! * And until the total
 “destruction, (although it is to be shorten-
 “ed,

thus: And one period of seven (years) shall glorify the
 covenant to many; and the middle of this septenary shall
 cause all sacrifices to cease.

* Strictly, On the wing of abominations the destroyer;
 that is, As soon as that covenant shall be established,
 Jerusalem will hasten to its ruin. — I take the words
 to be a personification by which the frequent blood-
 shed in and about the temple might be described as it
 were in a lively picture. However I wish that the
 reading: And in the temple there will be an abomination
 of the Destroyer, could be proved by more than that
 single MS, which the worthy Bishop of Oxford has
 intimated to Mr. Michaelis. If not, I apprehend it
 probable that our Saviour might not intend to quote
 the very words of Daniel, but only to express and
 to contract the sense of the prophetic descrip-
 tion. Then the word temple in the Vatican MS of
 Theodotion (as on the contrary the Alexandrine
 reads wing) might be originally a marginal gloss
 which crept afterwards into the Vulgate and into the
 above-mentioned MS of the Hebrew text.

"ed,) wrath* will be poured forth upon
"the ruins of this devoted place."

From hence then it appears, that the time of the *Messiah's* coming is determined by two different Numbers, the second number being still more exact than the first, but both of them expressed in such a manner, as might easily be retained in the memory of the people. (*Shabhuim shibhim.*)

There might otherwise have arisen some chronological dispute concerning the single years between *Daniel* and the *Messiah*; but by indicating *one period of seventy years* BEFORE which he was not to be expected, and *another period of seven years* AFTER which he was to be expected no more, the angel adopted a method, of all others the least liable to mistakes.

C 3

The

* The noun *wrath* is frequently omitted by the Hebrews, though indeed not before the verb in the text, (Compare *Jon.* iv. 1.) but it is often joined to the same verb. (for Inst. 2 *Chron.* xii. 7. *Jer.* xlii. 18.) Perhaps the ellipsis also might be supplied from this very chapter of *Daniel* v. 11: "the curse will be poured upon the desolate place."

The vision in question happened in the first year of DARIUS the MEDE, (*Dan.* ix. 1. 2.) or the year of the world, according to USHER, 3466. (perhaps 3467, if it was at the *end* of the first year of *Darius*.) From the day of the vision, (no other term being fixed,) until the Messiah; there should still pass seven-times seventy, or four hundred and ninety years.

3466
and 490

year of the world 3956

This time was very near, and yet the distance great enough to excite an expectation, and to induce a suitable preparation for his coming. * — After eight-times seventy,

* If any one chooses to read and pronounce verse 25. & 26. in the following manner, (for which the reasons are to be seen in Mr. *Michaellis's* observations,) “until Messiah AND a certain *Emperor*; and — “Messiah together WITH a certain *Emperor* which “*is to come*, will destroy the city and the temple;” He may also, in that view, suppose, that the Period is fixed, at which this new and future Monarchy should

seventy, (or the year of the world four thousand and twenty six,) it would have been too late to expect it.

Having thus premised a gross or a round number which did not yet perfectly agree, (there being still a want of forty four years,) the angel proceeds to fix a certain term and to point out the time more exactly by adding *seven* more to that general and previous determination of seventy septenaries. This term from which we ought now to begin the computation, seems to be different from the commencement of the first number: and when about a year or two after the revelation of this vision, DANIEL really saw an Edict issued by CYRUS, for building Jerusalem, he could think of no other term. This royal Grant, from

should commence. Now it is remarkable that this same year of the world 3956 was exactly the time, when *Julius Caesar*, assuming the title of perpetual dictator, laid a foundation for the Reign of those Emperors who were to come and by whose troops Jerusalem was afterwards destroyed.

cession, from which I would begin the calculation, was published in the year of the world 3468. From this time until the Advent of the Messiah, DANIEL was told to compute seventy seven *septenaries* and sixty two *single* years. The former number indicates the *Æra* of the Messiah's coming; the latter the time of that destructive war, which was to desolate Jerusalem.

Seven-times seventy seven, or 539

and 3468

year of the world 4007

It is not expressed in the prophecy, in what manner *the last septenary* after the year of the world 4000, was to be computed; and as in the disputes about the year of our Saviour's birth the whole difference is but seven years, so this number may be in some measure applicable to each hypothesis. I apprehend the most probable opinion to be that of USHER, according to which Messiah was born in the year of the

the world 4000. And if so, the meaning would be that the days of the Messiah should begin WITH the seventy seventh period of seven years from the year 3468, or *with the first septenary* after 4000. If we take the year 3997 to be the year of his birth, (which is Mr. MANN's opinion,) then the meaning is, that the seventy seventh week of years should be *the first FULL week* of the time of the Messiah. If we take the year 4004, at which the common æra begins, the meaning is, that he was to appear WITHIN *the seventy seventh week*. However the most natural method seems to be that which agrees with the opinion of USHER.

After these *septenaries*, that is, from the year of the world 4007, we are taught still to count sixty two *single* years.

	4007
	62
	—
Year of the world	4069
which is the year of the Christian Æra sixty six.	

In

In this year, as we learn from history, the Jewish war began, during which Jerusalem was invested by the Romans and totally destroyed. The prophecy does not only speak of the *destruction* of Jerusalem; but also expressly mentions the *coming of a victorious People*, and the *War*, which commenced four years before, and brought on that destruction: and supposing the prophecy to be intended as an admonition to the Jews, it was better to mark the time of the *beginning* of the war, than to indicate only the *end* of the destruction, when the warning would have come too late.

Here, I believe, the computation closes, and the mentioning of ONE particular WEEK, occasioned by the repeated expression of WEEKS, was intended to comfort those, who upon hearing of a total destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, would be led to fear that now the gracious covenant of God was at an end. This ONE WEEK appears to me to be something very
singular

singular in its kind; and I should rather think it to imply a septenary space, not of *years*, but of *days*. At least the construction of the words in the Hebrew is not the same here as in the three preceding Verses, where some numbers of years, pointed out for a calculation, were called *weeks*, but it is now expressed as the subject or as the cause of what was to be hoped for. It is true indeed, the next following seven years after the above-mentioned sixty two, might of course be described now, since the war (the beginning of which was pointed out hitherto) took up exactly seven years. But it appears to me to be rather set down in *opposition* to that calamitous time, especially as we find *the end of the war* already mentioned in the preceding verse: and the benefit of this singular epoch also seems to promise something exceedingly grand in its nature, which, it is probable never came to pass but once in the world since the creation of mankind; nor can it by any means be applied

plied with more propriety than to what was performed by our Saviour during *one* common week, or in those seven last and most remarkable days of his abode on earth.*

Now if we begin that week from Sunday to Sunday, this was exactly the time appointed by Providence for rendering dear and ratifying the covenant of the Lord to so many believers. DODDRIDGE fixes Sunday to be the time when Jesus entered Jerusalem in the character of a pacifick King, as predicted by *Zachariah*. In the latter days of his life, when Thursday was approaching, he shewed himself peculiarly solicitous to strengthen the faith of his friends, (*John* xiii. 1.) and then it was that he delivered his truly consolatory dying discourses. *The MIDDLE of this week* will be THURSDAY, (strictly so, if we count from Monday seven days,) on which our Lord, by instituting his holy Supper, not only

* Mr. Hassencamp has already proposed this explication.

only abolished the passover and every other sacrifice, but also rendered the covenant of God dear to all his believers, and gave them an assurance of eternal grace in a peculiar and most solemn manner. On Friday that new covenant of divine mercy was ratified by the Mediator's death. On Saturday his being buried, was a further proof that he was undoubtedly dead, and his lying in the grave of a rich man must be considered as a circumstance predicted by the Prophets. (*Isai. liii. 9.*) And on Sunday his Resurrection gave the most satisfactory evidence to the truth of all his gracious promises to those who with a faithful heart would accept of that eternal covenant established by the Redeemer's blood.

However, should this *one week* in DANIEL, be considered by others as a period of seven years, the calculation will yet agree. For from the year of the world 4069, or the year of the christian æra sixty six, the war lasted seven years, till the year

73. These seven years of a fatal war, as they were circumstantially predicted by our Lord, must have strengthened the faith of those *many christians*, who, warned by their Saviour to fly in good time, were then in safety and saw at a distance the accomplishment of Christ's words. In the middle of these seven years, (A. C. seventy,) the sacrifices did not only cease for want of victims, as Mr. MICHAELIS has shewn; but they also actually ceased from the time when the temple was destroyed. *

Besides this two-fold Exposition, the calculation may likewise be applied in some measure to any other system. If Jesus was born in the year of the world 4004, (which is the least probable hypothesis,) then his birth would fall just in the middle of the last septenary of 4007, and the meaning of the words might be, "that, if we take
" one of the above-mentioned septenaries,
" namely

* The Arabian translator has thus expressed the text, "*the Altars and sacrifices shall cease.*"

“namely the latter of them, the great Re-
 “storer of the covenant, by whom all
 “further sacrifices shall be rendered su-
 “perfluous, is to come in the middle of
 “these seven years.” But then we should
 be at a loss how to compute the sixty-two
 years. Supposing he was born 3997, the
 same explication would answer and the
 meaning might be, “Taking one of those
 “septenaries, not indeed the first *full* week
 “of that happy time, but the preceding
 “week, *within* which the Messiah shall
 “appear in the world, we are to expect
 “him exactly in the middle of that septe-
 “tenary:” though this would be rather a
 forced than a natural sense of the words.
 So that one of the two first explications
 will be thought by all means preferable to
 either of these. Be this as it may, I must
 consider it as a singular mark of divine
 wisdom, that, as to the main point, this
 prophecy agrees at once with history,
 chronology and true criticism, in so many
 respects and after so many contradictory
 hypo-

hypotheses; though only one of those different explications can be the true sense of the Prophet.

Should either these conjectures or the essay on which they are founded, be thought more probable than what has hitherto been attempted upon the subject, let it be observed that they both are the *result of Doctor KENNICOTT's collation of Hebrew manuscripts.*

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

CANON

OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT.

OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

CANON

OF THE

OLD TESTAMENT.



OBSERVATIONS, &c.

IN the 24th Chapter of St. *Luke* v. 27 and 44, our Saviour is said to have referred to *Moses*, to all the *Prophets*, and to *all the SCRIPTURES*, in order to point out from thence, and to *expound*, those passages which were fulfilled in himself. The Interpreters on the place are almost unanimously of opinion, that this is to be explained by the common method of the Jews, who are used to divide the Old Testament under the three distinct Heads, of — The *Law*, the *Prophets*, and the *Scriptures*. It is remarkable, that two Centuries and a half before the commencement of the Christian *Æra*, this division of the Hebrew Bible prevailed amongst the Jews in Egypt, as we learn from the Preface of the Son of *Sirach*. Another argument in Support of the Canon of the Old Testament is drawn from the Septuagint's containing every Book of the Hebrew Text. This Translation, where it agrees with the Text of the Jews in Palestine,

will be thought the more important, as it has been so much esteemed by the ancient Church, not only in Egypt long before the days of our Saviour; but also amongst the Jews, who understood the Greek, even at the time of the Apostles; and there can be no doubt, that the Apostles, who frequently quoted from the Septuagint, would have given us some hints of what Books we ought to reject, had there been any danger in acknowledging the divine Authority of those which are contained both in the Hebrew Text and in the Greek Translation.

However, as this is a matter that concerns our most important interests, it can not be amiss to try what further illustrations may be brought in to clear up the Subject. But before I proceed, I cannot forbear mentioning, that, with respect to the Historical part of these Observations, I am not a little indebted to the Informations of my learned friend, the Rev. Mr. BURG-MANN, Minister at the Savoy.

I know not of any Historical Testimony hitherto produced, on which the least Suspicion can be grounded that any Book, now belonging to the Hebrew Bible, was deficient in the Sacred Code *at the Time of our Saviour*. His confirmation of the whole is very evident; and that, to every Christian, must certainly be esteemed a most satisfactory and conclusive argument. We do not meet with the remotest Conjecture, that

at

at any subsequent Period, mentioned in History, the addition of any Book, whose Authority was at that Time dubious, had been intruded into the Canon by the Synagogue. Indeed, an Attempt of this Kind would certainly have shocked the common People, who were no less obstinately tenacious of their traditions than the leading part of the nation. And notwithstanding there was sometimes a dispute about the *contents*, or the importance of a Book, (some Books seeming to be offensive *,) yet none of the disputants,

* “Some learned Jews, (says a Jewish writer,) have attempted to keep the Book of *Ecclesiastes* private; [that is, to withhold it from the public perusal;] “because in their opinion it seemed to contain Heresies; and others have objected to it, that it expressed contradictions.” (*Carpenter*, *Introduct. ad libros V. T. P. II. p. 222.*) But even this passage shews, that there was no doubt that the *Ecclesiastes* made a part of the Sacred Code. The dispute arose solely from the supposed difficulties occurring in that Book; and consequently, the attempt of a few *Individuals* amongst the Jews, to lessen its Authority, can be of no importance. The like Attempt hath been made even on the Book of *Daniel*; the Divinity of whose Writings is evinced beyond all exception. (Compare *Ezech. xiv, 14. 20. Matth. xxiv, 15.*)—Nor ought we to pay any regard to the Suggestions of modern Writers, if they advance nothing that weakens the strength of our Arguments, and are calculated merely to display the difficulties attending this or that Book in particular. Critics of this kind seldom consider maturely the circumstances of Time; a point, certainly, of much weight in Subjects of this nature. To

tants, (although they could not be strangers to an attempt of this nature, had it really been made,)

explain my Sentiments by an instance, let us take a view of those truly noble Characters which occur in the Book of *Ruth*; but let us not judge of them after the European manners which have been long since varied and refined by Christianity. A young Widow leaves her own Country for the sake of accompanying her Mother-in-law, whom she tenderly loves. The Matron is possessed of an estate by which she can make happy this affectionate daughter so soon as she may meet with a relation, who shall resolve to take her for his wife. One of her nearest relations, though not as yet enamoured of her, seems to be greatly prejudiced in her favour, and testifies his regard by repeated acts of kindness. In a case like this some formalities might in the present times be naturally required, — the omission of which would be thought a Crime, since they are not only very proper in themselves, but also prescribed by Laws. However as the husband, amongst the Jews, might relinquish his wife almost at his pleasure, so a declaration on the man's part seems to have been sufficient for marriage, provided no other man had a nearer claim to the woman. The wife was even considered as belonging to the husband's possessions; and Polygamy being winked at by the civil Laws would not allow of a Matrimony so decent as that which has been formed in later times by Christian Monogamy. Such being the case, it was indeed Virtue in a young woman, (who seems to have been beautiful too,) not to look out for youth and riches, but for the most lawful marriage; and as she could rely upon the judgement of her Mother-in-law, who wished her welfare, it was prudent to deliver herself together with her estate to that man, whom the Mother-in-

law

made,) did ever presume to say, what would certainly have been the most natural objection against an offensive Book, that it was an *addition* to, and of a later date than their Canon. Nor is it by any means probable, that the Jews in Palestine would have adopted a Book belonging to the Collection of those Sacred Scriptures which were in use amongst the Greeks, whom they treated with contempt, if that Book had not always been considered as a part of their own Canon.

The modern Jews are used to call those 39 Parts of the Sacred Writings, which they adopt, (and which we equally allow,) by the smaller number of 24 Books; which distribution obtained so early as the time of the Targumists, who have thus expressed themselves: "During the day he searches the 24 Books of the Divine Law, namely, the word of the Prophets and other Scriptures, but at the night he studies the six parts of the Mishna*."

The number 22, which we find in *Josephus*, seems to have been, if not a holy, at least a

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law had chosen, in preference to any other; though many, it appears, would have thought themselves happy in this match. It was also a proof of great and even Heroic Virtue in *Boaz*, who now began to be enamoured of her, that he resolved to take her for his wife no sooner, nor to allow himself the least claim, till he could assert it in a lawful manner.

* *Buxtorf*. Lexic. Chald. sub voce MISHNA.

very common number; being a kind of help to the memory, as it corresponded with the Hebrew Alphabet. (Thus we see even some Psalms distributed in an alphabetical order, and also in earlier times the ten Commandments were counted by the fingers.) There is a passage in the Chaldee Paraphrase of the *Canticles*, which the rather confirms me in this opinion. "Let us have Thy Law; then we shall rejoice and be glad over the 22 Characters in which it is written *." But be this as it may, it is certain, that in the fourth Century of the Christian Era, it was the custom at *Jerusalem* to divide the complete Collection of Sacred Scriptures into *Two and twenty Books*, taking several Books for one. This method appears to have been very much in use, as may be collected from *Cyril the Bishop of Jerusalem* who adopted it even in his Catechetical Lectures. These instructions were drawn up without any great preparations and in a slight manner: the Author evidently did not imagine, that this extemporary performance could be of use to posterity in explaining the words of *Josephus*; but only intended to teach, amongst other rudiments, that division, which was the most usual in common life †. He himself says,

* Chap. i, v. 4. See *Walton's Polyglot*.

† *Cyrisi Hierosolymorum Archiepisc. Opera.* edit. Tb. Milles, Oxon. 1703. fol. Cateches. 4. §. 22.

says*, that "his Scholar ought to learn by heart the following distribution;" and he divides the *Two and twenty Books* of the Old Testament in the following manner. 1—5.) "The five Books of *Moses*.—6) *Joshua*.—7) The Book of *Judges*, "*together with that of Ruth*,"—8) The first and the second Books of *Kings*: "These, says he, are reckoned by the Hebrews as one Book."—9) The third and fourth Book of *Kings*.—10) First and second of *Chronicles*.—11) The first and second Book of *Ezra*.—12) *Esther*.—13) *Job*.—14) *Psalms*.—15) *Proverbs*.—16) *Ecclesiastes*.—17) "*and the Canticles*, (to use his own words,) "*is the seventeenth Book*."—18) Five of the prophetical Books. The twelve Prophets.—19) *Isaiah*.—20) *Jeremiah* together with *Baruch*, the *Lamentations* and the *Epistle*. [Though by the way *Baruch* and the *Epistle* are mentioned merely from the Septuagint, and ought to be excluded, as wanting the Confirmation of the Palestine Text.]—21) *Ezekiel*.—22) "And *Daniel*, he adds; *is the Two and twentieth Book of the Old Testament*."

This then, being the most common method of distributing the Old Testament at *Jerusalem*, we ought, I think, to expound that celebrated Passage of *Josephus*, before hinted at, not after our fancy; but rather according to the vulgar and

and general sentiments of his countrymen; especially when we consider, that he had not only dwelt at *Jerusalem*, but was also versed in the *Greek Language* as well as *Cyril* himself.

The Passage, I mean, is taken from the first Book against *Apion*. §. 8. "We have not many Books contradicting each other; but only two and twenty, which contain the whole History of our Nation, and are justly thought to be of divine origin.—These Scriptures, continues he, reach down to the time of *Artaxerxes Longimanus*." — (the very Period at which *Esther*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah* and *Malachi* lived.) — He adds, "that the writings of a later date, from *Artaxerxes* until his own time, could not claim the same authority, because the series of succeeding Prophets, which had been hitherto certain, did cease from that Period." And, as a proof how scrupulous the Hebrews were in regard to their Canon, he assures us: "That until his time nobody would have attempted either to make any additions to it, or to take away from it, or to alter any thing in it." This Assertion is the more important, as *Josephus* lived about 40 years after our Saviour's death; and will therefore serve to corroborate the testimony of *Akiba*, which I shall presently consider.

Whatever *historical Fragments* are to be collected from the Jewish writings after our Saviour's time, and whatever may be produced as

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traditions from that time, they all tend to confirm the Sentiment of *Josephus* respecting the Integrity and inviolable Sanctity of the Hebrew Canon. There is a complete Catalogue of Sacred Scriptures in the Talmud, which perfectly agrees with our Collection. Presupposing the divine origin of the Mosaic writings, it is said in the first Section of the Treatise *Babha Bathra* *.

"According to the Tradition of Rabbins the single parts of the Prophetical Books are, *Joshua*, "*Judges*, *Samuel*, *Kings*, *Jeremiah*, *Ezechiel*, "*Isaiah*, and the Twelve;" — and a little farther: "According to the Tradition of Rabbins the parts of the Scriptures are, *Ruth*, *Psalms*, "*Job*, *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, *Canticles*, *Lamentations*, *Daniel* and *Esther*, *Ezra*, and the Chronicles."

But what will be thought still more important, is an *historical Fragment* taken from the *Mishna*, in which the very words are preserved of such of the most eminent Doctors, as lived nearest the time of *Jesus Christ*, and some of them exactly at the same time. The Passage, I mean, occurs in the Treatise on polluting the hands. (*Massecheth Jadaim*) Sect. 3. † The controversy of the Doctors shews that both the contending

* The Passage is contracted in *Lightsfoot* ad *Luc.* 24. 44.

† Compare *Pfeiffer* Critic. Sac. Cap. XIV. Sect. 2. Quæst. 4.

tending parties must have had in their Bible those Books about which the debate arose. They did not disagree in regard to the *Canonical* authority of such or such a part of Scripture, but about the *cautious use, and the reading* of them. For the Question was, "Whether of them, if not perhaps both, might pollute the hands?" (that is to say, whether the reading them might excite sinful or erroneous thoughts? so as that the use of them ought to be restrained; or at least, after reading them, whether it would be requisite to cleanse the hands?). "All Sacred Scriptures do pollute the hands; the *Canticles* and the *Ecclesiastes* pollute the hands. Rabbi *Juda* says: "the *Canticles* pollute the hands; as for the *Ecclesiastes*, there is a dispute about it. Rabbi *Jose* says: The *Ecclesiastes* does not pollute the hands, but in regard to the *Canticles* the opinions are various. Rabbi *Simeon* says: "The *Ecclesiastes* belongs to the less important Doctrines of the School of *Shammai*, and to the more important Doctrines of the School of *HILLEL*. Rabbi *Simeon*, the Son of *Asai*, spoke: "To me it was delivered from the mouth of the Seventy two Elders on that day when they introduced to the School Rabbi *Eliezer*, the Son of *Asaria*, that the *Canticles* and the *Ecclesiastes* do pollute the hands. "Rabbi *Akiba* spoke: "Bless me and be merciful! no man of *Israel* did ever contest as to
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"the Canticles; For, surely, *that* will not pollute the hands! since the whole world is not worth the day when it was given to Israel: for all Scriptures (that is, the whole third part of the Bible) "are holy, but the Canticles are holy in the highest degree; and if there has been any difference of opinions, it could only be in regard to the Ecclesiastes. Rabbi Yôchanan, the Son-in-Law to Rabbi Asai, spoke like as the Son of Asai had spoken. Thus they have disputed about it, and thus it was determined."

— This Examination, absurd and confused as it may naturally appear to us, is yet a proof, that even *before our Saviour was born* the two most celebrated Doctors of the Pharisees at *Jerusalem*, *Shammai* and *Hillel* together with their numerous disciples, must certainly have had those Books in their Canon, with regard to the use of which they were of different opinions,—presupposing however the Authenticity of them; and consequently the portions of Scripture then under controversy must have been a part of that Bible which was in use at *Jerusalem* at the time of *Jesus Christ*.

But we may probably draw from this remarkable fragment another conclusion still more important, after having previously removed a doubt which for some time held me in suspense on the subject. I was uncertain with respect to the identity of *Akiba*, whose words are quoted

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in the Passage? For should we suppose him to be the person mentioned by *Jerome* as being the Preceptor of *Aquila*, it would be a testimony of the second Century, remarkable indeed in other respects *. Mr. BURGMANN, however, who has consulted a learned Jew on this occasion, tells me, that they know of but one R. Akiba, (*Ben Joseph*,) and that he is to be considered as the Speaker both in the above cited Passage and other places of the Talmud. "It is true, said he, there was another Rabbi nearly about the same time, whose name is something like his; viz. R. Akabiah (*Ben Mehaleel*); but in the Passage referred to, every tradition belongs to those who remained after the destruction of *Jerusalem*."—This will seem the more probable to the Reader, when he considers that the Talmudists lived at *Tiberias*, where also that more celebrated *Ben Joseph Akiba* resided.

Now if it certainly be this man, whom we are to understand as speaking in the Passage before us, we may without any hesitation conclude, that at the time of *Jesus Christ*, not only in *Galilee*, but especially at *Tiberias*, (a Town in which our Saviour as it were daily abode, and where the Jews had one of their most flourishing Schools,) they knew of no other Collection of

* See *Collier's Historical Dictionary*, or *Moreri*.

of Sacred Books, than that, to which our blessed Lord hath affixed his Sanction, as consisting of the *Law*, the *Prophets* and the *Scriptures*; and that they then valued as much the third part or the *Hagiographers* as either of the foregoing parts; nay, and that amongst the latter, the *Canticles*, (against which the most specious objections have been urged by modern writers,) not only expressly are mentioned, but also were esteemed as a most holy Book even at *Tiberias*. This argument will appear the more conclusive, when we consider, that both the *Mishna* and *Gemara* were originally compiled at *Tiberias*; and consequently we cannot expect any Testimony more authentic than those fragments quoted from the *Talmud*. But the evidence must appear unexceptionable, in a question that is merely historical, if the Author of those words was that *Akiba*, who, being the Master of the School at *Tiberias* 40 years, had gained the highest reputation amongst the Jews in *Palestine*, and was born about 20 years after Christ's death*. For then it can by no means be supposed, that in so very short an Interval of Time, such an Alteration, as the Intrusion of a doubtful Book into the Canon, could have obtained. Either the first Christians, who were

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* See Dictionnaire Encyclopédique.

used to the vulgar Bible of *Tiberias* from their youth, or the Jews, of whom many Fragments are still extant, would have mentioned a fact of so great importance; and we might the more reasonably expect some account of it from either party, as they were continually watching over each other's conduct, and would willingly have seized every occasion to fix the blame upon their antagonists.

As for the *Canticles* in particular; this Book has been translated not only by those ancient Interpreters who are inserted in the Polyglot; but also in the second Century by three Jews, namely *Aquila*, *Theodotion* and *Symmachus* *. And with regard to the high esteem in which it was held, the Inscriptions of two Translations in the Polyglot, though not so old as what has been produced already, will yet appear very remarkable. The Chaldee begins in this manner: "Songs and Hymns, which *Solomon*, the Prophet, King of Israel, *spoke by the Spirit of Prophecy* before *Jehova* the Lord of the universe;"—and a little farther: "The ninth Song of *Solomon*, King of Israel, was spoken by the holy Ghost before *Jehova* the Lord of the universe." Thus

* See *Nonnen's* Disput. de Canonica autoritate Cantici Canticorum. Traj. ad Rhen. 1725. pag. 108.

" Thus spake *Solomon the Prophet, &c.*" In the same manner the title of the Arabic. " The Song of Songs of *Solomon, the Son of David, the Prophet.*" And here, by the way, let it be remembered, that, to judge of the canonical Authority of a Book, these Translations, being intended for whole Churches, are of greater consequence, than the sentiments of any individuals.

These Quotations, I believe, will be sufficient to persuade every candid Christian, that, when our Saviour approves of the whole Bible, as it was adopted at *Jerusalem* and *Tiberias* in his own time, we also ought to assert and insist on the Divinity of this little Poem; though at the same time we may acknowledge the internal difficulties of it to be so great, that it requires no small portion of self-denying modesty to confess our ignorance of its true meaning. Nay more, we might perhaps easily be induced to give up the Book, could the canonical Authority, which it justly claims, be refuted by evident Facts.

The Matter in question, however, is by no means so desperate as it may at first sight appear. There are indeed *objections, of a moral kind, against the Canticles.* But, to judge impartially of the Book, we ought separately to examine each of those two *entirely different* points of view, in which it may be considered: If by the scenes described in the Poem our thoughts were led to

a nobler and more refined love, as certainly was the kind intention of the great Author of our being, with regard to those intimate connexions of two sympathizing Souls *, it would then be very improper, arbitrarily to deduce such an improvement from it, as seems to arise from a few hints occasionally interspersed in it : but before we determine what may be the remoter idea, we ought to bring the whole picture nearer to our view. Now as there are two sorts of Interpreters and of Readers, some adhering to the most literal sense of the words, others combining, either immediately or *mediately*, a more exalted idea with the description ; they will both be equally concerned in the following questions : *viz.* “ Is there any passage in the “ Book incompatible with the decorum of the “ Language in which, and of the Nation to “ whom it was originally delivered ? ” † — and, “ Taking at first the Poem in its most literal “ signification, can he, who does not allow of an “ allegorical sense, perceive some *moral* design “ worthy of divine Inspiration ? ” — The propriety

* Ephes. v, 25. 32. Psalm xlv.

† We shall not be able sufficiently to answer this question, until the *original sense* of the *single words* in the Poem be examined with more accuracy than has been hitherto done. It would, therefore, rather argue a want of judgment to found objections on such single expressions.

priety of these questions being once granted, there are no further objections, I humbly apprehend, that immediately tend to invalidate the divine Origin of this Book.

But to answer these questions, it will perhaps be thought necessary to remove some prejudices, which, as they cannot be ascertained, should never be considered as objections of any consequence. If the Poem should be thought to have only one fixed sense, it is certainly a mere prejudice, to assert, that it would be improper for a Sacred Book to have merely a *moral* or even a *political* tendency. And yet this must be allowed with regard to a great part of the Mosaic Writings, and of the other historical Books; though they *ultimately* tend to confirm and establish Religion. It is also a prejudice, in my opinion, to argue, that the description of an innocent love, though not criminal in itself, is at least too trifling to deserve a place in a Code of Revelation. And yet the elegy of *David* on his friend *Jonathan* was preserved in Scripture, although that admirable Poem contains nothing but the complaints of afflicted friendship: and is not true love the highest degree of friendship? — It is likewise a prejudice, to urge, that the Relation of Expressions of an immoral tendency, and the calling natural things by their respective names, is absolutely blameable, under any *circumstances* whatsoever: even

where it can excite no dangerous curiosity, nor clash with the idea of what is decent. And yet the rash expressions of *Job*, as well as the erroneous assertions of his friends, are circumstantially displayed in Scripture; nay, even the poisonous words of Satan,—even blasphemies against the Son and the Spirit of God, are repeated in the Bible. The most scandalous discourses and practices are mentioned there, as so many *proofs of the corrupted heart of men*; though, generally, accompanied with marks of censure. What harm can it then be, to caution innocent simplicity by putting her, *under certain circumstances*, in mind of the very words of cunning seducers*, when the representation of the whole tends to preserve her heart from the like artful seduction? why should not the snare be shewn to her which she ought to avoid†?

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* Some expressions in the Poem, which may seem to offend chaste ears, are perhaps the words of seducing Courtiers. This is the Sentiment of that ingenious Writer, whose opinion I shall soon lay before the Reader. I would only suggest it here as an Hypothesis, which will remain rather doubtful till the Poem be examined in a critical way; however, as the same uncertainty lies on the side of the opponent, it may serve to counterbalance the objection, or to lessen its weight.

† As to the Idea of decency, I must refer to the Bishop of Oxford's elegant Lectures *de Poësi Sacra Hebr. Praelect.* 31. and to Mr. Michaelis's Notes.

These and the like prejudices being thus obviated, we may perhaps discover in this Poem even at first sight a very important moral scheme, useful in some respect to our own age and circumstances, and still more so, at the Period, when it was written, especially, if we adopt the solution lately proposed by an anonymous German Writer, who thinks it to be a species of *Moral Poem* intended to discountenance *Polygamy*, and guard the Reader against those illiberal seductions with which a custom so evil and pernicious is commonly attended *. The scandal in question was so great at the time of *Solomon*, that we may expect, God would excite a Prophet to reduce the minds of the people to a more natural love. In our Author's opinion, therefore, the Sacred Poet, to exemplify the engaging superiority of conjugal happiness, as resulting from Monogamy, and as the lot of conjugal Love, describes a Shepherdess, flying from a licentious court and the enticements of a voluptuous King, in search of a beloved husband in the country, to whom she is allied by marriage,

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riage,

* Granting this Hypothesis to be well founded, the Canticles would not be a Poem *of*, but *on Solomon*: and I have elsewhere shewn that the particle prefixed is capable of the latter signification. See the Author's *Exercitatus Critic. in Job.* c. xix. v. 23—29. to be had of C. Heydinger, in the Strand.

riage, without being jealous of rivals. The encouragement of innocent tenderness will always be the most effectual remedy to restrain a whole nation from prevailing lewdness; and if this beautiful Poem was intended by God to promote that effect, then another objection, not indeed unanswerable, will entirely lose its force, namely, "that Polygamy is no where expressly dis-
 "countenanced in the Old Testament." Penal Laws would not have had the power to influence a sensual people, or to check in those rude times a practice, which until this day, though under a different name, still exerts the most tyrannical sway, even over such men, as in other respects are actuated by good principles. But a *Poem*, a *Picture*; a lively description, which would animate the tender *feelings*, (though not excite a brutal *sensuality*, as many writings of our modern Poets do,) an *innocent pastoral*, *softly moving the heart*; — this seems to have been the only effectual means, by which people might be drawn back, and forced as it were to the opposite virtue. It is the same in our days; when many, who hate or contemn marriage, would lead a life, which, according to sound moral principles, is infinitely more execrable than Polygamy ever can be; a life, which even of course induces, what we might call a Polygamy of the most cruel and atrocious kind;

kind; or, what is commonly the case, a Polyandry, big with the most pernicious evils. How may these monsters be effectually suppressed? Shew the poor deluded mortal, either in nature or in a lively picture, what blessings eternal wisdom has annexed to an alliance between two persons, united by an honest affection, justly entitled even in the present life to the same advantages, and mutually aspiring to the same well-grounded hopes of eternity. Let him be forced to *see*—and what can be a more natural conclusion, than that he will then *feel* and *envy* their felicity, and study to imitate the fair example?—

Until this solution occurred, which seems to me the most natural, it gave me some satisfaction, to consider, that an inquisitive mind, if it finds the arguments in support of a truth to be founded on a solid ground, should never be moved by mere doubts, or, what amounts to the same, by questions proceeding from human ignorance. I was therefore highly pleased with an observation of the Rev. Mr. PAULSEN, who shews from *Chardin's Travels*, that the Oriental people, being of a more ardent temper, are still used to excite devotion by the most sensual and allegorical descriptions. And though our taste, refined by Christianity, is quite different; yet, if perhaps the Jews, as will seem very probable, were fond of allegories of this kind, we ought

not to be astonished at finding one instance of it in a portion of Sacred Scripture, which was designed for all nations, and originally delivered to those of the Eastern World.

Nevertheless, I cannot deny, that amidst the difficulties which have occurred to me, either on reading the Bible and other Books, or in my own meditations, those moral objections against the Canticles above suggested have always seemed to me the most important. But since even these perplexing doubts have been so far obviated as to satisfy my own mind; and since I find that others, who are possessed of much more sagacity, than I can pretend to, never were moved by those difficulties; would it not be acting in contradiction to reason as well as against my own interest, should I, upon the sandy ground of other objections less important, reject a Religion, which as it is certainly founded on incontestable arguments, must ever be *the only solid comfort of my life and death?*

REMARKS



R E M A R K S

On the true Reading of the Passage

I TIM. III, 16.

BEFORE I undertake to propose my Remarks on this important Passage, may I be allowed to offer a Paraphrase of it together with some Illustrations.

P A R A P H R A S E.

“THE pillar and ground of the whole
“Christian Doctrine, and, without controversy,
“a very great mystery of that Religion which
“encourages Godliness, is this truth, That it
“was God, who appeared in a Human Nature
“on earth; who was justified and proclaimed*
by

* Thus God is said *Luke* vii, 29. to have been *justified*, when the people *believed* in him. And *Oecumenius*, a Greek Author, whom *Bengelius* has quoted from a Manuscript, explains it by, “he was *shown* (or *declared*) to be *GOD*.” Compare also the words of *Oecumenius* as quoted by *Wetstein*, which shall be produced hereafter in the Remarks.

“ by the miraculous power of the holy Ghost;
 “ who was seen (especially after his resur-
 “ rection) by Messengers *, (by whom the fame
 “ of it should be divulged;) who was preached
 “ (as being the universal Saviour) amongst
 “ Heathen Nations; who actually met with be-
 “ lief in a world hitherto wedded to idolatry;
 “ and was at last, in a glorious manner, taken
 “ up into heaven.”

R E M A R K S.

IN order to satisfy myself in the true Reading of this Passage, I have collected from *Walton's Polyglot*, *Kuster's Edition of Millius*, *Bengelius* and *Weistlein*, such Testimonies, as are produced either *for*, or *against* the Word, here rendered GOD; not presupposing what I *would*, but impartially expecting what I *should* find to be the true Reading. So that I may assure myself of having adopted the only candid method in which a critical truth ought to be examined. I have likewise,

* Thus the word is used in the Greek Bible, *Isai.* xviii. v. 2. xxxiii. v. 7. *Ezech.* xxx. v. 9. where also are meant *Messengers of "God,"* and of the *"Church;"* so that it seems to be the most significant term to express the solemn function of an *Apostle*, by whom that GOD, who appeared on earth, was to be announced.

wise, as far as I was able, availed myself of the opportunity of making some further inquiries respecting the *Alexandrine*; and of comparing that remarkable *Manuscript of Doctor ASKEW*, who has shewn me on this occasion the greatest politeness. And now, in order to proceed with greater impartiality, I shall endeavour to lay down some Rules, by which the different readings may be easily examined.

R U L E T H E F I R S T .

*"Of two or three different Readings, that Reading
"is historically true or critically certain, in which
"most of the Chief Characters of a true Reading
"coincide."*

IT will appear from the following observations, that the vulgar reading of $\Sigma\epsilon\delta\varsigma$ must be *the only true one*, that the probability in favour of the reading $\delta\varsigma$ is but very slight, and that the reading δ (though adopted by *Wetstein*) has scarce any plausible argument in its support.



R U L E

RULE THE SECOND.

*"That Reading, in general, is the true one, which
 "agrees with most of the Manuscripts in the Ori-
 "ginal Language."*

OMitting all those Manuscripts, of which it may not be absolutely certain, whether they have been compared with the Passage in Question, I find that according to Mr. *Michaelis's* Catalogue, (given in his Introduction to the New Testament, pag. 346, &c.) 57 Manuscripts at least have been used by Critics on the Epistles of St. *Paul*; and 46 at least either diligently collated or accurately compiled. It also appears from *Wetstein's* Catalogue, that amongst those which he describes, upwards of 49 Manuscripts contain the Epistle and Passage in Question; 28 of which, at least, have been assiduously collated. He who will give himself the trouble to run over both Catalogues again with an eye to the Passage, may probably find the number far greater; but I would rather chuse to lessen, than enlarge the List.

Now, as the reading δ has but *one* Manuscript in its favour, (if, according to *Kußer* and *Wetstein*, the Manuscript of *Boernerus* reads δ ;;) or *two*, (if according to *Bengelius*, the reading of the Boer-

Boernerian Manuscript was originally ϑ ;) ; and as the reading ϑ is supported only by four or five Manuscripts, at most, we should not in every other case, when so many Manuscripts have been compared, and where the exceptions are so very few, hesitate a moment, what sentiment we ought to adopt. *Millius* and *Wetstein* assure us, that, excepting these few Manuscripts "the constant and unanimous Reading is ϑ ;" nay, and *Wetstein*, (though evidently with some degree of Reluctance,) expressly says, that "to this large majority of votes Berriman has added upwards of fifty others."

However, if by the *third Rule* subjoined, it shall appear more probable, that those Manuscripts which are alledged to support the reading ϑ , did originally read ϑ ; and if one Manuscript or two reading ϑ be considered as not at all decisive in this case; then we may confidently assert, that ϑ is the reading of *all Greek Manuscripts*, the reading of which we are able to examine. *Wetstein*, to weaken the above majority of Copies, objects their later date, being all of the Tenth Century. But if there are none on which a judgement may be formed but these, their consenting testimony will appear decisive. However, one farther witness, not consulted by *Wetstein* on this account, namely *the Manuscript of Dr. ASKEW*, seems very probably to be of the *ninth Century*, year the 34th; and if so, is at least

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of equal antiquity with the *Boernerian*, according to *Kuster's* computation : For that, in the beginning of the present Century was reckoned to be above 800 years old, and is one of those which are called even by *Wetstein* "*the most ancient Manuscripts.*"

Until the celebrated Possessor shall be pleased to furnish the Public with a more exact description, and some ample collations of this valuable Manuscript, it will, I hope, be agreeable to several Readers to see an account of what I have compiled from it ; though I shall rather transcribe my observations almost as they were at first set down, than select them ; least I should omit something that might be useful to form a previous judgement either of the antiquity of the Copy or of the value of the whole.

Wetstein calls this Manuscript *Codicem Antonii Askeu*, (Part. III. Num. 58.) but it is that very Manuscript, which was before called by him in the same place (Num. 22.) *Codex Richardi Mead*, as may be seen from the Catalogue at the end of his Book. *Dr. Askeu* also informs me, that it is the same Copy, which the late Chaplain *Wetstein* (a relation to the Editor of the New Testament) saw in *Mead's* Library. It consists of three volumes in octavo written on Parchment, and which, in the Possessor's opinion (whose name alone will serve for a proof) are not only uniform,

form, and belong to each other, but also of the date above-specified. As to the two latter volumes, which, according to a previous account of *Wetstein*, were in his time considered as *one* Manuscript, the letters are so similar that there can be no doubt of it; but with regard to the former volume, so far as I can recollect at present, the size of the Characters seemed to be a little different, (which, I believe, is of no consequence,) though I could meet with no traces from which a doubt might arise of its not being as old as the other two: The strokes of the letters appeared very nearly, if not entirely the same to me.

The *first* volume contains the four Evangelists. (The Character indicated by *Wetstein* P. 1. n. 109. I have observed too late to compare it with the Copy, but believe it to be the same Manuscript since *Dr. Askew* obtained it from *Mead's* collection.)

The 26th leaf begins with the Gospel of St. *Matthew*, where the *Genealogy* is strictly coherent with the historical part of the Book.

The initial letter B in βίβλος inclines very much below the line.

The words Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ, Δαδιδ, are written in short-hand ιω χυ, δαδ.

Matth. xxviii, 1. the larger letter ο in οψι is red.

Verf.

Verf. 7. ὁψοθαι is put instead of ὅψοθε, a manner of spelling, which some have considered as an instance of the Transcriber's being but little acquainted with the Language, so that he cannot be supposed to have arbitrarily corrected the Text, and consequently must have *faithfully transcribed the readings from an older Manuscript.*

There is some space between the words, but not always; there are also accents and marks of aspiration; the letters are of a smaller size; and the distinctions are marked only by single points.

Verf. 11. the words are thus crouded together, ἀπανταγενομενα, which is a proof of the antiquity of the Manuscript.

Verf. 16. ο in οἱ is written large and red.

εἰδεκαμαθηται and εισηγαλιαιαν linked together.

And the letters σ and τ frequently connected in one figure.

Verf. 20. ιδου ἐγωμεθυμῖναιμι, four words written as if only one.

The smaller γ commonly like our larger Γ; ε like a semicircle, to which is joined a perpendicular line something inflected.

The Manuscript has *not the modern sections* into Chapters and Versicles.

John xix, 13. the beginning Ο large and red. τούτων τῶν λόγων, like three *old Manuscripts*: viz. that at *Cambridge*, the oldest at *Basel*, and the eighth of *Stephanus*. In

In $\beta\eta\mu\alpha\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ the letter β like u, η like our larger H, λ like our larger T, a round σ at the end.

$\gamma\alpha\beta\alpha\delta\alpha$ with a single β , like two old Manuscripts, viz. the second of *Wolff* and the eight of *Stephanus*.

Verf. 14. has the present and difficult reading, about the sixth hour, but $\omega\varsigma$ instead of $\omega\varsigma\epsilon\iota$, as three old Manuscripts, the *Alexandrine*, the oldest at *Basil* and the *Cyprian* which agrees with the four oldest Manuscripts.

Also $\omega\varsigma\epsilon\iota\kappa\tau\eta$ blended together.

The figure of δ in $\delta\epsilon$ like an oblique triangle, one line of which stands out at the left hand.

The particle $\kappa\alpha\iota$ is not only separated from $\epsilon\iota\kappa\tau\eta$ by a point, but also the letter κ is large and red, as if it began a new section; which is a further proof of the Manuscript's being old.

In Verf. 15. the greater section likewise begins with 'Απεκρίθησαν , where we find at the margin the number 196 painted red and expressed by Greek letters.

Verf. 16. the first τ in $\tau\acute{o}\tau\epsilon$ is again large and red. But the number 197 belongs to Π in $\pi\alpha\rho\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\alpha\beta\omicron\nu$, which letter is in the same manner distinguished in the midst of the versicle.

Verf. 19. the figure of that red and larger E, to which the marginal number belongs, is like that in the *Alexandrine*, namely a semicircle with a semidiameter:

F

The

The letter ν in ἔγραψεν though the subsequent word begins with a consonant is remarkable, some judging by it of the age of the Manuscript.

Chap. xx, 1. The beginning letter red.

John xx, 31. and xxi, 1. we find between αὐτοῦ and μετὰ ταῦτα (these two last words being linked together) the letters $\tau\epsilon\theta$ in red colour; in the margin we see $\alpha\rho$ with one cross behind and another over the ρ , and the number 219. $\sigma\overline{\text{I}}\overline{\text{I}}\overline{\text{I}}$. verf. 3. is signed $\sigma\kappa$, 220. where I took, at first, the κ to be μ (40) as it looks like an u with a small line hanging down at the left hand, thus, $\sigma\mu$.

Verf. 4. the number $\sigma\mu\alpha$ (221,) belongs to οὐ μείντοι, however λ in Λέγει, verf. 4. is large and red.

Verf. 7. $\sigma\overline{\text{u}}\overline{\text{c}}$ (222) The κ quite like an u.

These numbers in the places where I have marked them, perfectly agree with the numbers in the margin of the Polyglot, which are said to be taken from old Manuscripts.

At the close of this first volume, we find by the same hand the following signature :

θ
πληρω τὸ παρὸν τετραεὶς ἀγγέλιον.

η ϵ ω τ
μν φευραρι εἰς κδ εἰτούς ωλδ: μν θ φθν

That is, "Finished the present Gospel in the month
"February the 24th of the year 834 after the in-
"carnation."

I am doubtful however, whether I am right in explaining the abbreviation at the end by *μετὰ διασπαρίαν*, or *διοφάνειαν*: where the figure, which I have supplied by an *f*, cannot be strictly expressed in printing; but if we delineate the last ϕ of *Wetstein* (Proleg. p. 2.) as it would look turning the lower part above and then holding it to a looking-glass, further drawing the line at the right hand through an oblong circle, then putting separately a perpendicular line to which is joined in the upper part the Roman mark of a short syllable, this will be exactly the figure of those three letters.

In the first word the letter ω is an inverted 8, (like the last ω of *Wetstein*) over which is a 9 (a circle, with a diameter standing out on both sides like an axis) and an acute accent above it.

in the third word like an H.

ϕ in the sixth word like the second of *Wetstein*.

Over the last letter an ω (like an inverted 8.) and the Jota, commonly subfixed — set above it like a grave accent.

The fourth word is crowded together in a manner that seems very old to me.

in $\epsilon\iota\sigma$ a small circle ending in two lines at the right hand, σ in a round figure, and a small τ above it.

in $\epsilon\tau\acute{o}\upsilon\sigma$ like a 6 to which is joined a larger T inclining downwards.

§ in the number, a triangle standing out at the left hand.

• in the fourth word and in the last abbreviation is that common figure in the Manuscript, namely, a perpendicular line with the sign of a short syllable at the right hand above.

The fourth word is marked with two acute accents in the first and third syllables.

The second volume contains the *Acts*, the Epistle of St. James, both of St. Peter, three of St. John, and that of St. Jude; but neither this nor the third volume have any signature at the bottom.

The Passage 1 John v, 7. is wanting, as has been already observed by *Wetstein*.

There are accents, marks of aspiration and interstices.

The letter *σ* at the end of the words is of a round figure.

• is the same as described in the Gospels.

The seventh leaf contains *Acts* i, 12—15. but evidently of a later hand.

The old Manuscript is paler and begins in the subsequent leaf with the same words, τότε ὑπέσρεψαν.

The Passage in *Acts* xx, 28. shews the reading, the Church of GOD, Θεοῦ. — παντὶ τῷ ποιμανίῳ· ἐν ᾧ — τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ Θεοῦ. ἦν &c.

The letter *τ* in ἐαυτοῖς at the beginning of a line is not only larger (as usual where a section

com-

commences) but also *gilded* on a reddish ground; and the Jota, which commonly is written under the line, parallel with it: both being a mark of *antiquity*.

In *ev* the letter *ε* like a 6, to which the above-described figure of *ν* is closely joined.

ω in *ω*, like an inverted 8.

The word Θεοῦ is expressed by an oblong circle, the axis standing out on both sides, strictly connected with an *υ*, which is covered by a circumflex.

Verf. 9. Καθήμενος Δεξιςθενίας. The letter *κ* at the end of the first word like a Roman C, as in those uncial Characters of the *Alexandrine*. Δ a larger triangle, red and gilded; *ε* in the subsequent *ετ* a semicircle, the semidiameter of which serves at the same time for the upper line of the *τ*, the two following *ε* and final *ε* like a 6; both *ν* as before-described; and three words twined together, but with only two acute accents.

Chap. xvii, 30. τοῦς μὲν Οὐ, where *Ο*, beginning the line, is large and gilded.

The third volume contains the Epistles of St. Paul, with that to the Hebrews; the Revelation is wanting.

There are accents, marks of aspiration and interstices, but no distinction by versicles.

This Manuscript *perhaps the oldest* of all those which can determine the Passage in question, and hitherto not yet collated in that instance, evidently and incontestably reads Θεός. — ζῶντος.

στύλος καὶ ἰδραῖωμα τῆς ἀληθείας· καὶ ὁμολογουμένως.
μέγα ἐστὶ τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον· ὅς ἐφανερώθη
— ὡφθη ἀγγέλοις — ἐν ἔθνεσιν.

The point standing below after ζῶντος. and above after μυστήριον· might seem to be a proof of a greater distinction at the first time; if not the distinctions were marked generally in a slight way: thus, not only a lower point is likewise put in a very improper manner before μέγα, but also there is a larger Γ painted red in the midst of the word, because it begins the line, which otherwise is the mark of a chief Section. This being the case, we may at least from hence be certain, that the Transcriber, who appears to have been in some respect a stranger to his Original, would not falsify the Text on purpose; and consequently, that *the more ancient Manuscript*, from which this Copy was transcribed, presented to him the same reading.

In στ the upper line of τ hangs over σ and is closely joined to it;

„ like a 6, from which a stroke falls down;

„ like a latin C in which the lower part is drawn upwards to the middle where it touches a semidiameter; (like the seventh of *Wetstein*).
2111 5 7 7,

η , σ , ν , and β , are as described above;
 α like an u , but the line on the left hand a little prominent, or like an inverted η . (This figure is wanting in *Weistein*.)

The word $\Theta\epsilon\delta\varsigma$ is expressed by an oblong circle, the diameter not standing out, with a round σ and a sort of circumflex above it.

Before I proceed to the *third Rule*, I cannot help denying the truth of a very material accusation, urged by *Weistein*, and by which an incautious Reader might easily be led into a mistake, from a twofold misrepresentation, which I know not how to justify. For he insinuates, “as if all those Manuscripts, collected “from the most different parts of the world, “which could not thus harmonize by chance, “were probably derived from a source, which, “at least in the present Passage, was wilfully “corrupted.”

It would be wonderful indeed, if this was the case, that among such a variety of Manuscripts, handed down to us, not so much as a single one, that might be decisive in the present question, should have been preserved. Nor would it be less surprizing, or rather unaccountable, why the Roman Church,—so renowned at once for its orthodoxy and its Love of uncorrupted antiquity,—should in the present Instance have refused to admit this favourable Reading into the Latin Version; while, at the

same time, it defends some other famous Passage, which, upon the same principles, the Greek Church would likewise have adopted, but did not.

Wetstein proceeds to assert, (but without al-
 ledging any proof of the fact,) " that in the
 " sixth Century a report came from *Constantinople*
 " to *Africa*, tending to insinuate that *Macedonius*,
 " by falsifying the Greek Manuscripts, had
 " caused the Copies then, *for the first time*, to
 " read *Θεός*:" and it is (continues he) not less
 certain [truly so, because the former assertion
 appears to be false] " that *also on another occasion*
 " *Macedonius* was convicted before the General
 " Synod of Bishops of having corrupted the
 " Text." Now, though the testimony of a Latin
 Writer, who would be uneasy to find his Latin
 Bible confuted by the Greek Text, must seem
 rather suspicious in the present question, yet we
 might be at a loss what to think of our Scriptures,
 if this charge was true. When I first saw in
Millius the Passage cited from *Liberatus*, (who
 himself owns that he knew nothing of the matter
 but by hearsay—) it appeared to me, as it also
 did to *Wetstein*, that the reading of *Hincmar*, who
 seemingly quotes the words of *Liberatus*, must
 be the true reading. But even then, the utmost
 we can collect from the above report, which is
 confirmed by no Greek Author, amounts to
 this, that the Emperor *Anastasius*, whose par-
 tiality

tiality also was seen in his banishing Bishop *Euphemius* merely to please the Eutychians, did first charge *Macedonius* with Nestorianism, and then banish him, under a pretext that he had introduced some false readings, the *most important* of which was with regard to the Passage in question, (*tanquam Evangelia falsasset, & MAXIME illud Apostoli dictum, Qui apparuit.*) Supposing his Antagonists to have been possessed of a Manuscript valuable for its antiquity, though injured by time, in which there appeared no more than the letters OC, and supposing the learned Bishop to have opposed those other Manuscripts, which gave the reading Θεός; then the African could say, (*not, that he had falsified the Copies; for this he says not; but,*) that he *translated* in a manner different of the Latin Reading and made of it Θεός, (*littera mutata O in Θ, VERTISSE & FECISSE Θ, i. e. ut esset: Deus apparuit.*) He says no more indeed: and yet this instance, weak as it may seem, we are told was the *most important* evidence to prove the alteration. Supposing further, that on this occasion a dispute might arise between the Bishops, “whether
“or no various Readings were admissible in
“Holy Writ?” (a question perhaps offensive to some of the Clergy of the Roman Church;) and that, *I know not who*, might alledge the Passage *Matth. xxvii, 48.*—(which has been interpolated in some Manuscripts by a marginal Gloss
from

from *John* xix, 34.)—then an African, who was present, could say, from thence forward, as *Severus* did, (not, that *Macedonius* had falsified the Gospel of *St. Matthew*; for this he says not in those words which *Wetstein* has quoted from him in the Passage of the Evangelist; but,) that, when he happened to be at *Constantinople* on occasion of those disputes against *Macedonius*, he himself saw a good Copy, in which that interpolation, known to the Latins, did not appear. (*Quum mea tenuitas in urbe regia esset MACEDONI ejusdem urbis quondam Archiepiscopi CAUSSA.*) This is indeed all what he says; in the mean time we learn from this Anecdote, that the Testimony of a Manuscript existing in *Greece* was at that Period, in *Latin* Countries, considered as of decisive Authority.

On the other side it is evident, even from those quotations collected by *Wetstein* himself, that long before the time of *Macedonius* the reading *Θεός* must have been universally, and in all ages, the Reading of the Greek Church. At a time when they did not require so much exactness in alledging the Passages of Scripture, (an accuracy, indeed, not so easy then, as it is now, since the Bible hath been distributed into Sections,) I mean, at the beginning of the second Century, *Ignatius* the disciple of an Apostle, was already acquainted with the doctrine of “God’s appearing in a human shape.”

“shape.” (ΘΕΟΥ ὡς Σωτῆρος φανερούμενον.) At the end of the same Century *Clement of Alexandria*, speaking of the *Logos*, expressly observes, that “he was certainly in a most evident manner manifested as GOD, and was equal to the Ruler of all things; for he was his Son.” *Hippolytus* (at the commencement of the third Century) says: “GOD was manifest in a body;” and in another place, (which *Wetstein* without any proof looks upon as a contradiction to the former sentiment,) “He was manifest as GOD and man.” In the fourth Century *Chrysostom*, Bishop of *Constantinople* before the time of *Macedonius*, according to *Wetstein*’s own declaration, did read θεός even in the Text now under consideration; as did likewise *Theodoret* in the fifth, *John of Damascus* in the eighth and *Theophylact* in the eleventh Century. And though formerly they acted with propriety in not alledging the Passage in question, but other arguments, against those adversaries who were willing to allow our blessed Saviour in some respect, the title of GOD; yet when the Divinity of *Jesus Christ* was more vehemently attacked, viz. in the fourth Century, we find that Passage more frequently used and more expressly quoted in order to vindicate the Doctrine of the Church. Thus *Cyril* of *Alexandria* has quoted it several times; and *Gregory* of *Nyssa* (as *Millius* observes) has emphatically urged this Passage

Passage against *Eunomius*. In the sixth Century, as appears from *Wetstein's* own collection, *He-sychius*, commenting upon *Zephan*. Chap. iii, expresses the second Verse thus, "She draws "not near to her GOD, who appeared unto her "in the flesh." Of those later Greeks, who furnish us with still stronger evidence, let me only produce a Passage or two from the tenth Century, that being the exact Period (according to *Wetstein*) in which those Manuscripts still extant begin, which all agree in reading *θεός*. Thus *Oecumenius*: "He was justified, he was declared "to be GOD." ἀπεφάνθη θεός, (as quoted by *Bengelius* from a Manuscript) to which another allegation, (offered by *Wetstein*) is by no means contrary; where *Oecumenius* says, "For he, "who appeared unto men in the flesh, was not "declared to be just (δικαιός ἐν ἡμέρῃ) in human "eyes, but in the eyes of the spirit: and though "he did not seem justified to carnal and irrational men, (for they said, "He is a glutton "and a wine-bibber!") yet was he justified to "those, who were strengthened by the Spirit "of God; "And we saw the glory, as of the "only—begotten, &c." (τοῖς ἐν πνεύματι θεοῦ "σεριζομένοις δεικνύμενοις.)"

Great, as this Variety of Testimonies may appear, and far exceeding what might reasonably have been expected, yet *Wetstein*, to weaken the

the Authority of the Greek Church, has collected together all those Passages where either the context required the proposition, ὃς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, (*who appeared in the flesh,*) or where the Fathers of the Church have added to the predicate, ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, not the subject Θεός, but some other name; (ὁ λόγος, ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ, ὁ Ἰησοῦς,): though it appears, that they did not quote these words from *St. Paul*, but from *St. John*; who makes the most frequent use of them in his first Epistle. Nay, though it is certain, that *Cyril* did read Θεός, yet the learned Editor of the New Testament appeals to a Passage of this Father, where the letters ΘC might just as probably have been worn out, not in a Manuscript of the *Bible*, but in the Copy containing the Treatise of *Cyril*; where, some Centuries after, *Photius* found nothing more than the remaining traces OC. This also appears to have been the case, in later times, with *four Manuscripts* of *CYRIL*, the number of which being referred to, and marked by *Wetstein* amongst the quotations of *Greek Manuscripts* of the New Testament might deceive an unwary Reader, and incline him to think that these also were so many *Greek Manuscripts* of the *Bible*. And as there is not one single *Greek Testimony* amongst those endless allegations which he suggests, in order to advance something that might look like an authority of this kind; he in the

next

next place urges amongst his chief Arguments, and enlists accordingly, a Passage of *Epiphanius**, which he himself in another place declares to be the offspring of a vicious Copy †. Not to mention his trusting to that idle assertion of *Julian* the Apostate that *Jesus* was never called God by *St. Paul*.

There are still two Passages, though confusedly thrown in by our Critic, in which (so far as can be judged without the context) some doubt perhaps started by the *Latin* Bishops, who were present in-council, might be refuted in an *hypothetical* manner ‡. viz. *Macarius* of *Jerusalem* §, explains the reading, *ὁ ὡς παρὰ θεῷ*, WHAT appeared in the flesh, that is to say, the Son of God ||, was then seen likewise even by the Angels. And *Cyril* of *Alexandria* (President at the *Ephesian Council*) repeatedly asserts, that by the great mystery of godliness nothing else can be meant, but *Jesus Christ*. The words of *Cyril* being less decisive, the meaning of *Macarius* may

* See his Testam. pag. 330.

† See Annotat. on Acts xx, 28. pag. 597.

‡ The mere possibility will be thought a sufficient answer to a merely doubtful or rather improbable objection.

§ In Synod. Nicen.

|| An Expression, like that of *Logos* in *Justin* the Martyr, not less emphatical in the mouth of an Orthodox Christian at those times, than the name of God. — Compare *Clement's* words, as quoted pag. 67.

only be as follows : " *Supposing the Latin reading to be true, as the Western Bishops would object, yet even then by, WHAT appeared in the flesh, we ought to understand the Son of God.*" The above-mentioned report of *Severus* concerning *Macedonius*, likewise occasioned by a conference, renders our explication the more probable.

Whoever will give himself the trouble to peruse *Wetstein* again, may be persuaded, (presupposing in the mean time our *third Rule*,) that from the first establishment of Christianity until now, whatever Greek Manuscripts are decisive in the present case, do all support the reading *965*. — And must not such a striking agreement between the *original Copies* be thought a great over-balance in proportion to the variations of some few Translations, which however, (as we shall shew hereafter) might take their rise from perhaps one single Manuscript much injured by frequent use ? Should any body attempt to correct the Text of *Cicero*, according to the blunders of his Translators, or the faults of the Press, he would be deservedly censured : Nor should we be at all pleased with him, who, without assigning some cogent reason for what he did, should alter the words of those Athenians, quoted by *Cicero* on authority of this great Scholar, in such places where we have fragments in the original *Greek*.

R U L E

R U L E T H E T H I R D .

"*That Reading, the later Origin of which cannot
 "be accounted for without supposing a wilful
 "Corruption, is (generally speaking) the true
 "one; and that which we can account for from
 "accidental Causes, is (generally speaking) the
 "false one."*

WE do not deny, that some people, who called themselves Christians, have forged a sort of Bible and other holy Books, either from the New Testament and from an ignorance of the Original Language, (as appears to have been the case with regard to the *Hebrew Gospel of St. Matthew* *,) or else from Traditions, idle Tales and malicious Inventions. Thus we are told that amongst others *Marcion*, the leader of a Sect in the second Century, from a prejudice entertained against the Old Testament did omit in the New all those Passages which are quoted from thence: though we may collect from what has been advanced in vindication of *Macedonius*, that the true sentiments of one party have been often misrepresented by their adversaries. It may likewise be expected, that now and

* See the Authenticity of the first and second Chapters of *St. Matthew's Gospel*, 8vo. printed for *C. Heydinger* pag. 15, &c. p. 34.

and then some individuals would falsify a Manuscript. However it is unfair, to rank in this class of malicious alterations those various readings, which owe their origin to a prior deficiency of some letters or lines worn out by time, or to the mistaking a marginal gloss for a part of the Text, or to the ignorance of a Transcriber ; and it is still more unjust to brand those frequent corrections of Manuscripts by a later hand with the name of counterfeits. For as to marginal glosses, every proprietor of a Book has certainly a right to put his notes to it : and with regard to corrections, it should be considered, that most of them took place at a time when a Manuscript, precious and scarce as it was, seems to have commonly been the only Copy of the Possessor ; so that he could nowhere better preserve than in his own Manuscript, what he thought were the true readings either from mere conjecture or from a collation of other Manuscripts : But more especially, before Manuscripts were become the fruitless Treasure of Libraries, it was, in some respect, a duty to preserve some lines almost worn out, by drawing a stronger stroke over them. I would not pretend to justify on this account *Junius*, who is supposed to have corrected the Alexandrian Manuscript in the Passage in question ; (for he was not the Proprietor of it :) but his conduct is perhaps excusable in some degree, in case he perceived
G any ;

any remains of a line in and above the letter. At least if he was an honest man, it must be owned by every impartial Judge, that the Testimonies of *Walton* and *Millius*, being more evident, will entirely clear him from every suspicion of an illiberal attempt.

These accidental circumstances being separated from the question ; We may next observe, that History, numberless quotations from the Fathers, and more than an hundred Manuscripts agree to induce us to believe, that the Christians have preserved the Holy Scriptures in the most faithful manner ; even where they might meet with some scruples or seeming contradictions, (for instance, in *Mark* xiv, 69. *John* xix, 14. &c.) Our *third Rule* therefore, as it serves for a maxim amongst critics in regard to every other Book, (also in regard to the Old Testament,) will be further enforced, when applied to the New Testament, even from that holiness, which Christians have ascribed to it in all ages.

Now to apply this Rule to the present question, it may not be amiss, to lay before the Reader what I have observed on a repeated examination of the *Alexandrian Manuscript*.

The assertion of *Wetstein* is true, that by the Testimony of our own eyes we are incapable of discerning any thing more in the Manuscript than the reading OC. However, though we admit of this fact, yet it does not confute the account

count *Millius* has given of it. His description rather exactly agrees with whatever I have observed in other Passages of the Manuscript ; even in the most trifling circumstances ; though he could not have thought of such an agreement then : and I must own that my esteem for the *faithfulness of the BRITISH CRITIC* is greatly increased by this examination. I cannot help repeating on this occasion many, perhaps seemingly trivial things : however as the inductions drawn from them are material enough to concern an inquisitive mind, if the conclusion shall appear to be true, the more learned Reader will certainly overlook the minuteness of the premises. But since the matter cannot easily be fully ascertained without the assistance of a copper-plate, the conclusion might perhaps appear the more evident to those who will give themselves the trouble to delineate the figures on paper according to the following description. The only sure way to convince myself what I ought to believe with regard to the Alexandrian Manuscript, seemed to me to be this ; That I should not enter upon the examination of the contested Passage, till I had previously considered, from a view of many other, *indisputable* places of the Manuscript, what injuries the Characters in general of this most ancient Copy might have suffered by length of time.

The letter *Theta*, Θ , wherever I have seen it in the least degree worn out, always looks exactly like an O; (the figure and the size of O and Θ are entirely the same, and both characters sometimes a little smaller when they happen to end the line;) only there is a very thin horizontal line drawn through the middle, from one side of the periphery to the other, like a diameter. I shall therefore, as it cannot otherwise be expressed in printing, hereafter write O instead of Θ ; cautioning however the Reader not to think this slender stroke worn out where I do not expressly observe that it is. The letter *Sigma* Σ has always the figure of a large latin C. Hence the word $\Sigma\epsilon\delta\varsigma$ (wherever I have seen it) is always shortened and looks like OC, distinct from ς ; in nothing, but a slight stroke between two thin points (or between two very small strokes) lying over the C; though this mark of an abbreviation in general is scarcely visible; and in every species of letters the horizontal strokes drawn through them are likewise very much worn out by time. Hence the sharpest eye, looking for that thin diameter in O, will often be scarce able to discern the stroke, which appears like a thin line, drawn as it were by a pin over the parchment, either without any remains of the ink at all; or if there is some colour left, stronger at the left hand, (be-
cause

cause the stroke drawn by the Writer from that side became still thinner at the right hand ;) and in this case there is commonly a point touching the periphery at the left side. This striking uniformity, and this agreement of a circumstance so frequent, and in my opinion decisive, with the description of *Millius*, (who had not observed it before in other places,) did not occur to me till I was putting my notes in order, and had laid the Manuscript aside. But, to shew in an incontestable manner the glaring inconsistency of the reading θ , I shall point out by a regular detail, some few instances, in which I could not easily be mistaken.

In *Rom.* ix, 5. I found OC ($\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$) and Ch. x, 2. OT ($\theta\epsilon\omicron\nu$) very distinct. The circle has its diameter, and the line over the last letter is cut off on both ends by a stroke tending to the right hand.

In the same Chap. vers. 1. the word ON ($\theta\epsilon\omicron\nu$) has the diameter distinct enough ; over N, is a small point at the left, and a small hook at the right hand.

John i, 1. ON ($\theta\epsilon\omicron\nu$) a very thin stroke over O, and above the stroke, at the left, as well as over N, two small points.

John v, 5. over OT a hair-line and a point.

Matth. xxv, 9. over O in ΜΑΛΛΟ ($\mu\alpha\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu$), not much more than two points are left of the mark of abbreviation.

Verf. 31. over 9 in ANOOT (ανθρωπου) two points distant from each other.

1 Tim. i, 4. over OT two points almost like water-spots.

Verf. 2. the line over OT exceeding pale, over P in the subsequent ΠPC (πατρος) but one point. It requires a clear eye to discover over C the incision in the parchment, the colour being greatly discharged.

Verf. 1. over IT (Ιησου) the first time only a small and thin line; but over the last letter of the subsequent word XT and of the word OT no more than a small point.

Over XT the second time only a vestige in the parchment, not much coloured; but over the subsequent IT ~~it~~ *no remains at all of the mark of abbreviation.*

John i, 1. both the upper line and the diameter are very distinct, because the beginning of the Book is written in a clear Cinnabar colour; however the inward line is *more visible at the left hand.*

1 John v, 6. ελθων, the stroke in O exceeding thin.

Matth. xxv, 9. πορευεσθαι, the line in O visible, but very slight.

Verf. 7. ηγεθησαν, the stroke in O extremely slight, but *more visible on the left side.*

Verf. 9. απεκριθησαν. the remains of what was once a diameter, on the *left side.*

1 John v, 6. in εδων, the stroke of Λ at the left hand (being thinner) is gone.

1 Tim. i, 1. of the upper line of Π in Παυλος, is left no more than the flight trace of a stroke in the middle;

It requires a sharp eye to discover in the parchment the mark of the horizontal stroke which was once in the Π of αποστολος;

The diameter of Η in επιταγην has only some colour remaining on the *left* side:

Where χριστου occurs the second time, the stroke of Χ ascending from the left to the right hand is exceeding pale, but still more so in the upper part, where the pen of the writer had lost something of its force.

Verf. 2. in ΟΥ the vestiges of the former diameter *more distinct at the left side*;

In Κ of ΚΥ (κυριου) the diverging strokes, being written with less impression, are become exceeding pale and almost gone.

Chap. ii, 5. the colour of the inward line of Ο in ΟΥ is *more visible on the left side*.

Chap. iv, 3. of both points remaining near the *periphery* that on the *left* side is a little larger.

Chap. i, 5. The Θ in καθαρως, is one of the most distinct, and yet the diameter appears like the mark of a pin in the parchment, a little coloured on both sides, but more so on the *left*;

The inward line of Ο in αγαθης seems as if it were tinged with water.

Matth. xxv, 10. Θυρα, in O only a stroke, and a coloured point almost invisible near the periphery, (but on which side, I have not set down.)

In the inscription of 1 *Timoth.* (written with smaller letters,) Θ in Τιμοθεον is a circle, the diameter of which being gone, there appears hardly so much as a point on each side of the periphery, but more distinct on the left.

1 *John v, 5.* in ΟΥ, no more than a small point is discernible near the periphery at the left hand.

Matth. xxv, 7. in O, of παρθενοι, there remains of the diameter a point scarce visible on the left side of the periphery.

1 *Tim. i, 4.* in O of ΟΥ no more than  a point remains, touching the periphery on the left side; as indistinct as if it were scratched by a pin from the circle: and the circle itself has suffered in the upper part, but more towards the right side, where the impression of the pen was weakened.

Rom. x, 3. a clear eye is required to see the colour in ΟΥ the second time it occurs.

Matth. xxv, 10. in O, of εισηλθον, no vestiges of ink, but only an incision in the parchment which shews that there was once a line;

εκληισθη η, the horizontal lines of both H, peculiarly the latter are obliterated, and there remains not much more than a slender mark.

The

The diameter of O has scarce any colour left.

Verf. 31. ελθῆ, (the letter ε is commonly a semicircle with a semidiameter,) in C, O and H, of the three *horizontal lines* there remains only a slight mark without colour.

In the inscription of 1 *Timoth.* (written in smaller letters) there are no remains of the horizontal line of Π in προς.

1 *John* v, 5. where εστιν occurs the first time, the ε looks like C without the horizontal line ; and so likewise, verf. 6. in ελθων.

It is the same with regard to both H in η αληθεια ;

In the latter H there appeared through a Microscope something like a coloured shadow towards the right hand. — But of the ϑ and ε we shall say more in the sequel.

Verf. 9. where ΟΥ occurs the first time, both the upper and the inward lines are almost worn out, but here the remaining point once appears at the right hand ; — I say, *once*, namely in those instances, which I have noted down, and so far as I can remember : because when I observed the Manuscript, I rather expected to meet again with such vestiges on the *right side* as I thought I had discovered on my first inspection ; so that it was the more striking to me, upon putting my observations in order, to find almost every remaining stroke on the *left side*.

And

And where in the same place *OR* occurs the second time, *by the naked eye* I saw no more than a shadow of a point scarce visible on the left side: but, what a little surprized me, upon applying a *microscope* I saw absolutely nothing. (Henceforth I would therefore trust in this case rather to the naked eyes of *Walton* and *Millius* than to the glasses of *Wetstein* and his friends.)

Matth. xxv, 31. in *ANOOT* (*ανθρωπου*)  *Theta* perfectly resembles *O*, there being not the least vestige of an inward line; and particularly in the letters *O* (Θ) and *C* (Ε) of *αληθεια* 1 *John* v, 6. I could neither by the microscope nor by the naked eye, discover the least remains of those horizontal strokes, which undoubtedly have been there formerly.

In pointing out these instances from the *Alexandrian Manuscript*, I can assure the Reader that I was as impartial, as I flatter myself I shall appear to have been with regard to those historical Testimonies above-discussed; and though I may possibly have now and then committed some error of the pen, yet it will not be denied, that of the various passages I have noted down, the most frequent obliterations are to be met with in the fifth Chapter of the first Ep. of *St. John*;—that Passage being the most minutely considered. But this is still more remarkable with regard to the Passage of 1 *Tim.* iii, 16, immediately in question;

question; since almost every Traveller, interested in sacred Criticism, is desirous of seeing this celebrated Manuscript; and many of them have inadvertently rubbed the contested word, in examining it.

The letter O has now a point within it, and there is a stroke over the word, both seemingly of a later hand. When I viewed the Passage for the first time through a microscope, it seemed to me as if there was a shadow of a coloured point on the right side, where I might expect the diameter to appear, (but I saw no point touching the periphery;) at another time I could not again discover it; a third time and upon applying another microscope to the copy, there appeared some vestige of a paler ink on the left side. But the first Phænomenon did not strike me as before. Although these experiments agree with *Berri-man's* account, who as well as two other Gentlemen by the means of a glass and of the Sun-shine saw what they called some remains of the original line on the left side, and one of them perceived the like on the right hand; yet I have given my reasons already, why I would not, in looking for a yellow point, trust to the illusive microscope, and much less to the prismatic effects of a Sun-beam. In the upper line, (which alone would demonstrate an abbreviation, so that it could not be $\vartheta\varsigma$, and must be $\Sigma\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$.)

it

it seemed to me, as well *by the naked eye*, as through the microscope, that there was something of a tinge, like that of a paler ink; but even this is fallacious, because the extremities of the modern stroke already begin to grow somewhat yellow. However *Millius* seems to presuppose this upper line, when he says, that he himself at first believed the reading to be $\overline{OC}$. (For here, in *Kuster's* edition at least, that upper line is distinctly expressed.)

If there ever was a line, or a mark without colour (like an incision) in the O, it must have been effaced of course, the letter being so much rubbed, not indeed by a knife, but by fingers. As to the puncture nearly about the centre, it appears to be done with a pin, and intended to discriminate the letter on the reverse of the leaf, since *Wetstein* asserted that *Millius* had been deceived by the transparency of this letter. For there is on the other side of the leaf the word *εὐσεβειαν* Chap. vi, 3. the first C (ε) of which happens to fall (not, near the periphery, as erroneously represented in the explanatory figure given by *Wetstein*, but as it is well described by him in his discourse,) nearly about the centre of O. That ε resembles a larger latin C, from the middle of which is drawn an horizontal stroke, standing out beyond the semicircular extremities of the letter, and, though almost imperceptible, marked at its end with a larger point. If we draw

draw a semicircle through a total circle towards the left hand, putting between both prominencies a point without the circumference, this will be exactly the figure of the letter in question as it appears when the leaf is held up to the light. But then we shall find an interstice just before the left side of the periphery; so that *Millius* can by no means be confuted by supposing the transparency: for he assures us that he himself observed, upon looking at it more attentively, *some* traces of a thin stroke drawn through the letter, and vestiges that were *sufficiently evident, especially* ~~on~~ *on the left side, where the line touches the periphery*. Nor could that point be occasioned by the horizontal line of the inverted C on the other side; for this is not now visible on the opposite side of the leaf, however it might have been at the time of *Wetstein*, as I would believe in deference to his veracity. But, indeed, it is more probable that so small a point might be obliterated during the interval between *Millius's* time, and his. And here let me observe that the transparent strokes from the opposite side of those thin leaves of which the Manuscript consists are also easily to be distinguished either by the colour, (which appears not yellow, but gray,) or by the elevation on the parchment occasioned by the incisions of letters on the reverse, these incisions being more durable

derable than the colour of the ink. So that *Millius*, unless he was a man who wished to deceive, could not have misrepresented the case in this instance. Before his time the reading of the Passage appeared so far from being doubtful to the person who examined the Manuscript for the use of *Walton*, the Editor of the Polyglot, that, though he has marked variations of much less importance even on the same page, yet he gives not the least hint of a variation here : and *Walton* himself, about the year 1718, assures us, that notwithstanding the modern stroke, he found the traces of an original line.

It is also observable that in other passages on the same leaf with that in question, the Manuscript is much defaced and obliterated, in like manner. Not only those *syllables and words* which are *near the margin* of this fatally injured leaf are lost, and the three lower lines next to OC have been rubbed by the fingers of the curious ; but also the neighbouring letters and the other traces of the chief word have suffered. H in *μυστηριον* has lost its *horizontal line* : and in N, that *stroke* which stands next to the word OC is almost effaced. Even in OC the inward part of the circumference of the O has suffered by time as if it were rubbed, and the upper part of the C is nearly gone. Fifty years hence posterity may probably find in the Alexandrian Manuscript no more than

than the letter O, and will perhaps quote it, in support of the reading of the Vulgate. In the next ensuing century after that period, the word *μυστηριον* only may remain—*μυστηριον* Εφανερωθη &c. and persons of like sentiments with those, who would now, in spite of all solid arguments, reject the reading *θεος*, merely on the authority of a most ancient Manuscript, will then be obliged (if they are consistent with their own principles) to supply the ellipsis from the precedent versicle, and translate the passage in this manner: “He (that is to say, the living God) was manifest in the flesh.” Be this as it may, if we ought to reject *θεος* here on the authority of the *Alexandrian* Copy, then ought we likewise to defend it, in *John* xix, 40. where, in contradiction to the rest of Manuscripts, this copy alone reads, “Then took they the body of GOD.”

From what has been said, it will appear, that, if we will not be satisfied with two or three witnesses, credible as they are, who declare the reading of the *Alexandrian* Manuscript to have formerly been *θεος*, in a more distinct manner, at least we ought to own that it is *by no means decisive* against the vulgar reading. And this is the case likewise with regard to those few old Manuscripts which are brought in to support the reading *θεος*. (For in the *Vatican*, in the Manuscript at *St. Germain*, and in the *Coislinian* fragment,

ment, the fatal loss of Leaves and Epistles in like manner affects the particular passage in question.) In that Manuscript at *Paris*, where the works of *Ephraim* are written over the Text of the New Testament, the words were wiped out with a sponge, and the finer strokes were the more easily destroyed, because the parchment was to be used for another Book: and yet *Wetstein*, who had examined the Manuscript and who inserts it in the list of his five vouchers, in favour of the reading $\theta\varsigma$, speaks of it in such a manner, as gives us reason to suspect that there might be some remains of $\theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$; at least, on the other side, nobody can prove that there were none. He only says, "that he *believes* here was OC, "because the thin stroke in O was *not to be seen*, "and the *upper line* did *seem* to him to be of another "hand." And by the way, considering that this modest and doubtful manner of speaking is not very usual to our Critic, I am rather inclined to think that the remains might be evident enough. The remainder of one small coloured point, or of an uncoloured and very thin hair-line would be sufficient to confirm the vulgar reading, and the total absence of all such remains is not sufficient to refute it. However it is a matter worthy the further examination of those who are residing for any time at *Paris*. The *Augian* Manuscript and that of *Boernerus* form together but a single Testi-

Testimony, the one being transcribed from the other, as we learn from *Wetstein* : and yet our Critic, (without throwing a suspicion against the upper line, as he did in the foregoing instance,) puts to the letters ω the sign of abbreviation $\overline{OC}$. If this had been remarked by *Kuster* with regard to the *Boernerian*, or if it is to be met with in the *Augian*, (which is highly probable, because *Wetstein* has examined the latter himself, and takes it to be the original copy,) we should then with greater assurance confirm by this united testimony the reading, not of ω , but of $\Theta\epsilon\delta\varsigma$. It is sufficient for me to observe, that this two-fold copy of an old Manuscript is likewise of no consequence at all against the common reading. Amongst those Manuscripts, which are less ancient, and which accidentally happen to be more decisive in this question, though they are of less importance in other cases, there is only *one* Manuscript which has the reading ω , namely that of *Colbert*, called by *Millius* the seventh and referred by him to the twelfth century. Nobody, I dare say, would attempt to oppose this only witness to the more ancient Manuscript of Dr. *Askew*, and to those others which *Wetstein* himself refers to the tenth Century. How old or how much effaced that Manuscript or those Manuscripts (if there were more) might be, from which the variation ω has been marked in the margin of the later Syriac translation, we are not able to determine, and can therefore fix no decisive judgement upon it.

H

With

With respect to the authorities brought in to support the reading δ , it is probable, they were all derived from one and the same source. And, after having prognosticated, that this may perhaps one day or other become the reading of the *Alexandrian* Manuscript, Thus if the *Clermontian* be as old as that at *Cambridge* (which however some have represented as the oldest of all *) we might expect to meet with it rather there than in any other copy. Now this Manuscript, — the only one which we certainly know to have the reading δ — as it belongs to the sixth Century †, can be of no consequence in a dispute concerning the obliteration of two very slender lines. Perhaps (as is supposed by *Bengelius*) we may add to this Voucher the sanction of the *Boernerian* Manuscript, formerly belonging to *Francius*. At least *Lc. Clerc* (according to his letter prefixed to *Kuster's* New Testament) saw in the Library of *Francius* a Manuscript, sold at *Amsterdam* in the year 1705, in which Manuscript he remarked the second letter of the reading OC to be of a later hand. However, if this was not the same copy with that which now goes by the name of *Boernerus*; it will be of no authority at all, be-
cause

* See Mr. *Michaëlis's* Introduction to the New Testament (*Einleitung in die Schriften des neuen Testaments*; pag. 402. the second Edition, which is much more perfect than the first of which we have an English translation.)

† *Michaëlis's* *Einleitung*, &c. pag. 418.

cause we have no description of it. One thing is evident, namely, that both these Manuscripts have been designedly accommodated to, and formed after the pattern of the Latin translation*; so that their testimony can be no separate proof, except where they contradict their Original. But it is remarkable, that the corrector of the Clermontian, (whom *Weistlein* himself † declares to have been a native, and a very able Grecian, and to have compared the copy with a Greek Manuscript,) has chosen the reading ΘC. The variations collected by *Velsius* (mentioned by *Walton* and *Millius*) are too partial on the side of the Vulgate, and perhaps unfaithfully compared§; so that even *Weistlein* (though he would fain prove the reading ϑ by a spurious passage of *Epiphanius*) takes no notice at all of them upon this occasion.

Thus amongst the vast multitude of Greek Manuscripts extant, all such as can fairly be decisive in the present case, do unanimously agree in reading ϑς; — A result, which, I own, has often not a little animated my spirits, and invigorated my pursuits in that barren wilderness, through which I was obliged to lead the way, and wander with my Reader!

H 2

But

* See *Michaelis*, as above, pag. 398. and 420.

† Proleg. P. 2. p. 6.

§ See *Ernesti* Institutio Interpretis N. T. p. 140.

“But there are whole Churches, says our Critic, who all concur in the reading δ !”—Possibly, there may: However, as many Churches appear to be somewhat partial (perhaps not without reason) in defending the readings of their first translation, — that friendly guide by which they were introduced into the knowledge of the Gospel; their authority ultimately rests upon the principal Manuscript of the first Translator, if he can be supposed to have had more than one Manuscript. The whole sum of quotations from the Fathers of the *Latin* Church can prove nothing more than that in their times the translations of their Church have read QUOD. Even the Vulgate, the more ancient *Italic* being the groundwork of it, cannot be appealed to as a separate witness. — And here by the way it may be asked, how came it to pass, that *Liberatus*, speaking of the reading of the *African* or *Latin* Church, did not express the reading *quod*, but that of *qui*? — In fact, there are only two translations, which should seem to be of consequence in the question, I mean the *oldest Latin*, and the *oldest Syriac* translation: for as to the later translations in the same Languages, it is well known, how much they generally depend upon the prior Version.

Wetstein quotes likewise the Coptic translation, in favour of O; but, not to mention that it commonly and *evidently* agrees with the variations of the

the Latin *, it is sufficient to inform the Reader that our Critic produces the witness of the Coptic again to support the reading OC; so that, if this is another translation in the same tongue, one evidence will counterbalance the other. In order to ascertain my own mind about this seeming contradiction, I applied to my learned friend, the Rev. Mr. WOIDE, who was so kind as to send me the following answer, which, I hope, will be as agreeable to the inquisitive Reader, as it was satisfactory to myself.

"THE Coptic Translation, (says he) reads, "WHO was manifest, as Wilkins has observed in "his Preface to the Coptic New Testament. In "the Sahidic dialect no translation of the whole "Bible has yet been discovered, though it must "have been certainly translated into that dialect, "as appears from the Acts, almost entirely preserved, together with some fragments of the "Gospel of St. John and of the second Epistle "of St. Peter, which may be seen at Oxford. In "a Manuscript *de Mystério Literarum Græcarum* " (likewise at Oxford) there are several Quotations from the Old and New Testament "amongst which the Passage in question is referred to, pag. 31. lin. 10. where, speaking of "our Redeemer, it says, "Hic Mystagogos nobis "fuit" &c. and in another Paragraph, "ILLE

H 3

"mani-

* Michaelis, pag. 194.

" *manifestatus est in carne & justificatus in Spiritu.*"

" But we cannot from hence collect, what the

" reading was in the Sahidic, (whether $\Theta\iota\delta\varsigma$, or

" $\delta\varsigma$,) because we should ourselves speak in the

" same manner, " *THIS was our teacher ; He*

" *was manifest, &c.*" In that Sahidic Manuscript

" belonging to Dr. *Ashew*, I have not met with

" the Passage. As to the resemblance between

" the letters, which we find in the Greek, the

" case is not the same in the Coptic. The Sahi-

" dic dialect of the Coptic tongue was certainly

" not known to *Wetstein* at the time he wrote.

" And that all Manuscripts seen by *Wilkins* did

" read $\delta\varsigma$, is very probable, because he would

" otherwise have naturally remarked it. But

" what then can be the reason, that *the Arabic*,

" *which was translated from the Coptic, reads $\Theta\iota\delta\varsigma$?*"

Thus far my learned friend. And thus the

later Coptic will seem to be the only Translator

who reads OC (the most natural obliteration

from $\Theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$) in contradiction to the Latin, with

whom however he is thought to agree. Unless

there be some ambiguity with regard to the

Gender in the Coptic, it appears to be a mistake

in *Wetstein* to appeal to the Coptic in support of

δ : but if it is doubtful, then it is improper to

produce it as giving two *perfect* evidences.

Should the argument, which we are to explain

hereafter in vindication of the antiquity of the

Arabic, be confirmed from hence by stronger

proofs, and should the latter have been derived

from

from the Coptic; then either *that more ancient Coptic translation did really read* θεός, or, if not, the whole weight of it would be counterbalanced by the difference of that Arabic Version which is supposed to have been derived from the Coptic.

When *Wetstein* appeals to the Armenian Reading of Θ, let it be observed, that this was not only translated from the Syriac, but also has been corrected from the Vulgate*. The later Arabic likewise, as we learn from *Expenius* himself, was taken, (at least the *Epistolary* parts of it,) from the Syriac†. And with regard to the *Æthiopic*, it is said to have been not accurately translated and to agree in other places with the Alexandrian§; so that the Alexandrian, whether we suppose the reading of it to be θε̄ or ος, would counterbalance this authority. But I must farther observe, that after having for my own satisfaction, deciphered the *Æthiopic* by comparing each word with a sufficient number of other Passages, I find that in the versicle in question it *almost literally agrees with the Syriac translation*: so that, where the Syriac expresses *Godliness* by *Righteousness*, (as it commonly does,) the *Æthiopian* likewise uses the word *ṣṣ*, which signifies both *truth* and *righteousness*. There is, indeed, some slight difference in two

H 4

verbs,

* *Michaelis*, Sect. 37.

† *Michaelis*, pag. 206.

§ *Michaelis*, Sect. 36.

verbs, as to Grammar, (*"they have preached,"*
"they have believed,") but this is conformable to
 the resemblance between this Language and the
 Arabic. — Thus the Arabian likewise expresses
 the passive of both verbs by a paraphrastical
 construction, though in a manner something
 different. — However, there is one instance, in
 which the *Æthiopian* Translator appears to have
 at least looked into the Original Text, because
 he gives us a hint of the *Greek* Etymology by
 translating, "*For great is, as must be confessed,*
"(strictly, AS THEY CONFESS,) the mystery of
"righteousness."

To come now nearer to the source from
 which the reading δ might be derived; The
most ancient Syriac Translator, — although the pre-
 fixed letter *d* has been translated by the word
"that" in the *Polyglot*; which would oblige
 us to suppose either the reading $\delta\tau\iota$, or the total
 loss of the contested word and a paraphrase at the
 same time; — I say, notwithstanding this, the
most ancient Syriac Translator has certainly used
 a relative pronoun. Nor is the Gender of this
 pronoun ambiguous, as *Bengelius* seems to take it
 for granted, but is justly quoted in favour of δ
 by *Wetstein*; because the following propositions
 (amongst which, on supposing $\delta\tau\iota$, we ought
 to find an epistasis) are all strictly connected with
 the first proposition by the copulative: "*And*
"truly great is this mystery of piety, WHICH is re-
"vealed in the flesh, AND declared to be just by the
"spirit,

"*spirit, AND seen by Messengers, (or Angels,) AND preached, &c.*" This is also the case in the Æthiopic, as well with regard to the conjunction, as to the prefixed Letter which answers to the Hebrew *Zain*.

But this Syriac translation agrees with the most ancient Latin in so many respects, that their joint evidence must of course be considered as no more than *one* Testimony. And it is even probable, (according to Mr. *Michaelis's* opinion *,) that the primitive Latin translation was performed by a Syrian and corrected from the Syriac. This single Testimony, therefore, can by no means be opposed to the Greek original Text. It loses besides very much of its force, when we consider another circumstance, which will serve as a farther strong argument against the suspicion of premeditated false readings; namely, that, excepting that most ancient Clermontian Manuscript, (which even for the sake of its antiquity is not decisive in this case,) those many Greek Manuscripts, which otherwise appear to agree in a partial manner with the Latin translation, have all deserted their Original in the present case. Thus the margin of the later Syriac translation, which commonly is favourable to the Latin †, reads ⲟⲩ: and even the Alexandrian, what-

* *Cura Syriacæ in Acta Apostolorum. Sect. 9. and Introduction to the New Testament. (Einleitung, pag. 156.)*

† *Michaelis's Einleitung. pag. 189.*

whatever was its true reading, lessens the authority of the Latin Version, since though it is usually very consonant with this version, yet on the present occasion, they clearly differ. Nay, and every *ancient* Manuscript that hath reached our times, not excepting even those three, which are brought in to support the reading δ , have, all of them, been evidently rendered conformable to the Latin translation which is inserted with them in the same copy. Even that fifth Voucher of *Wetstein's*, produced in favour of δ , namely the Manuscript of *Colbert*, and which, as *Millius* informs us, has been greatly interpolated, is observed to stand on the side of the Syriac and the Latin whilst every other Manuscript tends to confirm the reading of the Text *; so that its contradiction to δ must be reckoned here as of very considerable importance. This remark may be applied also to several other Greek Manuscripts, which in general, and often partially, agree with the Syriac translation †. The *Leicestrian*, otherwise favourable to the Vulgate, reading " δ $\delta\epsilon\iota\varsigma$," has combined as it were the true reading with that which has the least authority. And what is more, even according to the quotations of *Wetstein*, not only *Lactantius*, a Latin writer of the fourth Century, was acquainted with the proposition, "*Mediator* AD-

" VENIT,

* *Michaelis*. pag. 429.

† *Michaelis*. pag. 394. 457. 461.

"VENIT, hoc est, DEUS in carne;" (as *Cassiodorus*, another *Latin* of the sixth age, in opposition to the mother of *Christ's* being buried, says: "DEUM ascendisse ad celos:"); but also *Ephraim*, — that writer so much esteemed by the *Syriac* Church, and who was so well versed in the Bible, seems to paraphrase the passage, when (as quoted by *Wetstein*,) he expresses himself thus: "God was born of a virgin."

But we have another argument still more important to urge in answer to the objection taken from the authority of Churches. Whether it was the *Syriac* (as is probable) or the *Latin* Translator, who gave rise to the reading?; whether it be a single or a two-fold Testimony, — (in case the *Æthiopic* should seem to be a Testimony by itself;) — yet, I observe, the translation of the *Arabian* in the *Polyglot*, which confirms the *Greek* Original, must certainly incline the scale of Criticism. Its rendering is as follows.

"These fundamental doctrines*, shalt thou mention; the great mystery of amiable Religion: GOD (אללה) did appear in the flesh, was declared to be just by the Spirit, was preached amongst the nations, was believed on in the world, was received up in glory."

Mr. *Michaelis* informs us†, that the reasons urged for asserting, that this *Arabic Translation* was

* Strictly, "these distinctive or peculiar doctrines," the expression being taken from a middle-wall.

† Introduction, (Einleitung.) Sect. 34.

was made after the seventh Century, are but slightly founded. There are indeed, he says, other reasons, which would have inclined him to think it of a *more ancient date* than is commonly imagined — had it not been for certain doubts which may be urged in opposition to that opinion. He has mentioned however only two objections that seem to weaken his own opinion, and it may well be supposed, he would point out such as seemed to him the most material. I have attended to them, but upon an accurate examination, they appear to me not to be of sufficient weight to invalidate his conjecture : nay, possibly on a stricter inquiry, they may rather be thought to corroborate the former Hypothesis of our German Critic : For, as to the apposition in the *Arabic Acts* xviii, 2. “the *Frangish* (or, *French*) “*Italy*,” this rather looks like the *modern interpolation* of a *more ancient Scripture*. And with regard to the difficulty arising from *Rom.* Chap. 15. there is not only, as the reading stands now, vers. 24. the name *Andulus*, (which came not into use till after the landing of the Saracens in *Andalusia*, in the year 711.) but the *older name*, *Spain*, is likewise to be met with there in the *Arabic*, vers. 28. אֶשְׁבִּינִי (*Hispania*). Now it is by no means probable, that the same writer, translating from the Greek, when the name was soon repeated after the first mention of it, should have expressed it by two different names. But supposing that after the seventh Century an Ara-
bic

bic Christian, where that less usual name (*Spain*) occurred the first time, might explain it in the margin by an expression more common in his tongue, (*Andalusia*;) then it is easy to conceive, that a Transcriber, taking it to be a various reading, would prefer the name which he saw in the margin; but where it occurs the second time, because there was nothing remarked in the margin, he had no occasion for altering *that* name, which was in more familiar use *before the landing of the Saracens*. It is therefore probable, that the Text, in which SPAIN is actually called by its *ancient* name, was in the hands of Christians in *Arabia* before that time; and that it consequently may be of some greater importance in the present question. Be this, as it may, this translation has one merit; it was *immediately made from the Greek* *.

The reading δ , however, utterly weak as it is, hath been adopted by *Wetstein*. It must be allowed, indeed, that this variation took its rise, when the Manuscript from which it was derived, could not have been very old. But whatever injury our Alexandrian, notwithstanding every precaution used by the Librarians, hath suffered, and farther will suffer, other Manuscripts, in those times suffered the like, from a daily and constant use. Who can determine how strong or weak the impression of the penmanship might be,

* *Michaelis's Einleitung. pag. 204.*

be, when the strokes of this word were drawn; how clear or pale the ink; or how well or ill preserved the Manuscript, before it came into *Syria* or *Italy*? — how well preserved, at least, in either of the two margins, where the syllable *Se*, or the letter *e* perhaps had its place; — the letters being frequently more contracted and less distinct at the end of the lines, and the margins being more frequently handled by the Reader? — Until these questions be answered, we should neither ground our religion on such a tottering bottom, nor attack it from such a broken wall!

It is remarkable, that even with regard to whole syllables, there most easily arises a variation at the end of words. For example, *Hebr.* xi, 19, the Alexandrian has *εγειραι δυναται* instead of *εγειρειν δυνατος*.

Now, in a Greek copy worn by frequent use, the Passage (according to our observations) would appear thus, OCCΦANCPΩOH, the letters close together; but then two C one near the other might be mistaken for only one, as Critics have often remarked in their notes on the Classics. In the *Latin*, if nothing more was left of the word *DEUS* than the letter *d*, (the final syllables of *manifestatus*, *justificatus*, &c. being also perhaps expressed by a doubtful abbreviation,) then it might be mistaken for *quod*. Even in the *SYRIAC*, if this was the source of the error (as I am inclined to believe,) it was very natural to be mistaken. For, supposing the word

אלהא

אלהו (*aloho*) to have been so far worn out, that there only remained of the second OLAPH, which stood close to the subsequent word, those two lines which look like the Hebrew Daleth ג; then according to the Alphabet of Old Estrangelo Characters * a Syrian could make nothing of it but a DOLATH †, and was obliged to translate, "The mystery WHICH was revealed." (*Mysterium quod revelatum est.*) But should we suppose O to be the genuine reading, then we are under a necessity likewise to suppose, that the Christians have committed a two-fold malicious falsification; First, by the addition of a C, and next by drawing one line within, and another above the O: Not to mention, how wonderful it would be, that of more than 80 Manuscripts only one or two ambiguous copies should have preserved the true reading.

R U L E T H E F O U R T H.

"Of two readings, (unless there be some material reason against the Rule,) that Reading is preferable which seems to convey a harsher sense.
"This is a maxim almost infallible."

AS these are the very words of the Rev. Dr. Ernesti, one of the ablest Critics of the age,

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* See Büttneri *Figurae variaeque formae Literarum*, quas obtulit societati Regiae scient. Götting.

† Though the figure ג would require a point within the two lines, to make it to be a *Dolath* * in the *Estrangelo* Alphabet, yet the absence of this point could not perplex a *Syriac* reader.

I may adopt the Rule as certain. He applies it to shew the preference of reading, "*the Church of GOD,*" Acts xx, 28. (Opusc. p. 340.)

RULE THE FIFTH.

"*The most probable of two or three Readings is that, by which a Writer, who is known to have had clear and precise ideas, shall seem to express himself in the clearest and precise manner.*"

RULE THE SIXTH.

"*The same obtains with regard to that Reading, which, according to the tenor or the whole System of the Book, it was most natural and reasonable to expect, should occur in that particular place.*"

THE application of these three latter, and of all other Rules of sound Criticism to the Passage in Question, we leave to every Friend of Truth.

F I N I S



